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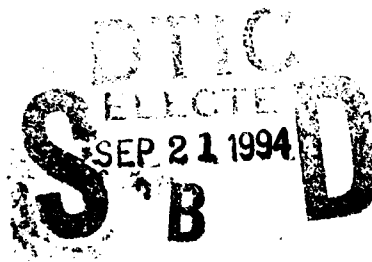
3 June 1994

Master's Thesis, 2 Aug 93-3 Jun 94

Counter-Insurgency in Cuba: Why Did
Batista Fail?

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This thesis analyzes the counterinsurgency efforts of the second Batista regime of Cuba, 1952-1958, using the "Sword Model" developed by Max G. Manwaring and John T. Fishel. The "Sword Model" is a paradigm developed to predict the probability of success of insurgencies by evaluating seven major criteria which are referred to as "dimensions."

The thesis concludes that all seven dimensions were detrimental to the longevity of the Batista regime. The major contributors to Batista's failure were his lack of legitimacy and poor unity of effort within the government as well as between Cuba and the major intervening power, the United States. Weak democratic traditions in Cuban society and a biased international news media exacerbated the crisis.

Based on the research conducted, it is believed that the "Sword Model" would have accurately predicted the outcome of the second Batista regime were it available during the 1950's. The "Sword Model" is therefore a viable tool in evaluating insurgencies.

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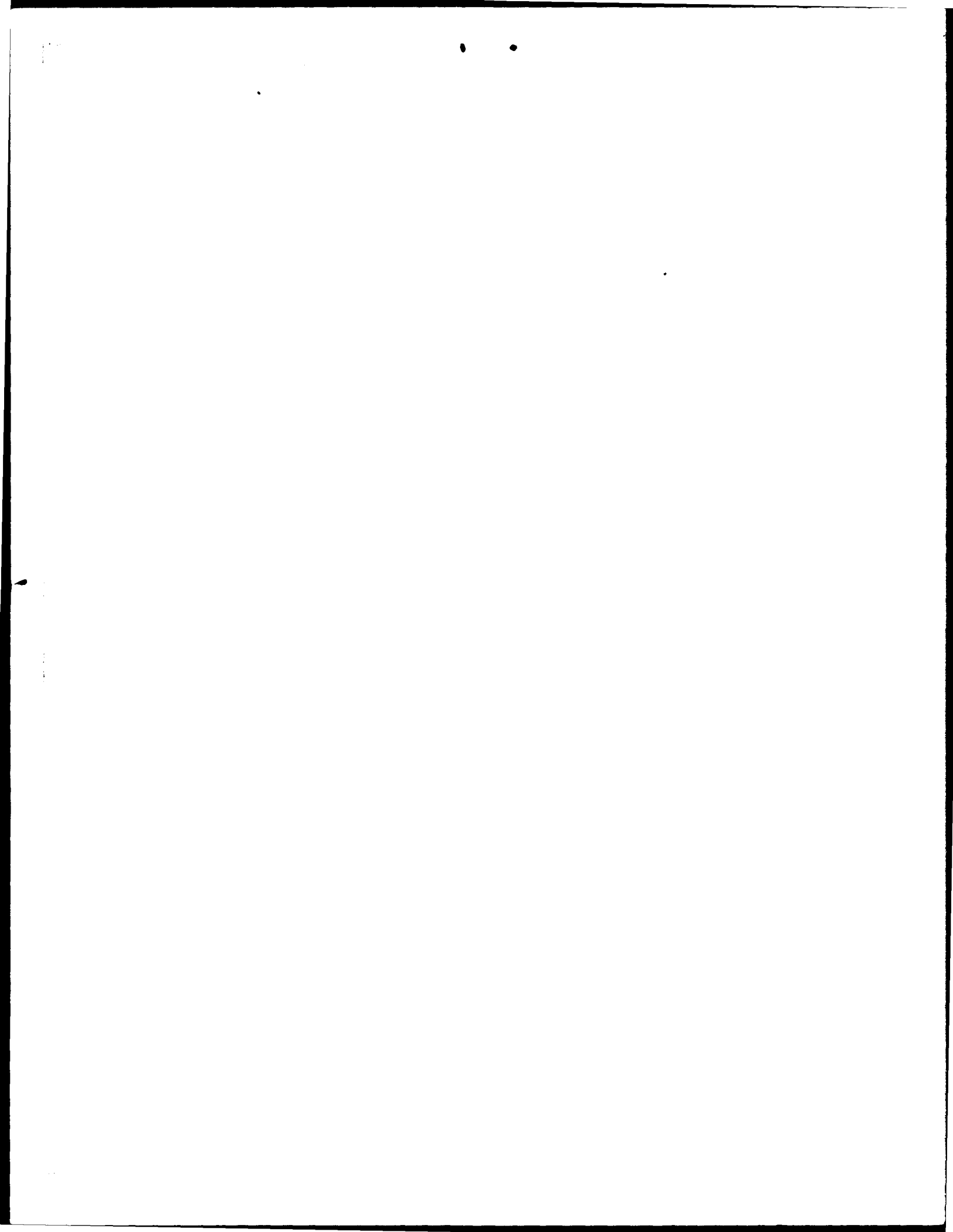
Counter-insurgency, Batista, Cuba, Sword Model,
Insurgency

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COUNTER-INSURGENCY IN CUBA: WHY DID BATISTA FAIL?

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

RICARDO J. BLANCO, MAJ, USMC
B.S., U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD, 1978

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 6


MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

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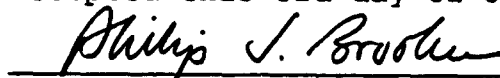
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

MMAS ABSTRACT

COUNTER-INSURGENCY IN CUBA: WHY DID BATISTA FAIL? by MAJ
Ricardo J. Blanco, USMC, 122 pages.

This thesis analyzes the counter-insurgency efforts of the second Batista regime of Cuba, 1952-1958, using the "Sword Model" developed by Max G. Manwaring and John T. Fishel. The "Sword Model" is a paradigm developed to predict the probability of success of insurgencies by evaluating seven major criteria which are referred to as "dimensions."

The thesis concludes that all seven dimensions were detrimental to the longevity of the Batista regime. The major contributors to Batista's failure were his lack of legitimacy and poor unity of effort within the government as well as with the major intervening power, the United States. Weak democratic traditions in Cuban society and a biased international news media exacerbated the crisis.

Based on the research conducted, it is believed that the "Sword Model" would have accurately predicted the outcome of the second Batista regime were it available during the 1950's. The "Sword Model" is therefore a viable tool in evaluating insurgencies.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On 1 January 1959 Fulgencio Batista, dictator of Cuba since 1952, departed Cuba for exile in Spain. Thus ended a six year power struggle between Batista and a loose political coalition which promised political, economic, and social reform. In broader historical perspective, the successful revolution ushered Cuba into a new radical phase in her turbulent, post independence political history.¹ The revolutionary government of Fidel Castro that took power shortly after Batista fled on 1 January 1959 represented an unexpected direction for Cuba given her relative prosperity, advanced social legislation, and close ties with the United States.² This thesis will examine the principal factors that contributed to the failure of anti-revolutionary forces in Cuba during the period 1952-1959.

Methodology

Revolutions are dynamic, with numerous forces exerting varying degrees of influence on the movement

throughout its life cycle. The study of revolutionary movements has spawned a multitude of theories that attempt to forecast the outcome of the struggle. This thesis will use the "Sword Model" developed by Max G. Manwaring to analyze the relevancy and influence of various factors on the outcome of the Cuban Revolution (1952-1959). This model was developed from analysis of 43 Post World War II insurgencies.

The "Sword Model" organizes the factors which contribute to an insurgent movement first into two broad categories; those which exert a long-term impact and those which exert a short-term impact. Four factors (dimensions) are addressed under long-term impact while three factors (dimensions) are included under short-term impact. This analysis will identify the primary factors which affected the insurgent struggle and assign a weight to each factor as a means of quantifying the degree to which they contributed to the failure of the Batista government's counter-insurgency efforts. A weight of "1" will indicate that a particular factor contributed to the counter-insurgency. A weight of "0" will indicate that a particular factor is neutral, i.e., neither aiding nor detracting from the counter-insurgency efforts. A weight of "-1" will indicate that a factor detracted from

counter-insurgency efforts. The dimensions considered in the "Sword Model" together with their subordinate elements are summarized in Figure 1. Organizing the analysis using the "Sword Model" will provide a logical means of accurately identifying and weighting a particular factor's contribution to the life cycle of the insurgency.³

The "Sword Model" considers "legitimacy as the central concept leading to revolutionary success or failure."⁴ The concept of legitimacy for the purpose of this analysis includes: legality, level of popular support and international acceptance. The legality of a regime's assumption and maintenance of power is measured against a country's constitution and societal norms. The element of popular support often depends upon the extent to which a regime assists the public in attaining material, social, and political goals, whether a regime is viewed as just and honest in its dealings with the public and the regime's handling of minorities within society. The final element of legitimacy concerns how a regime is viewed externally, i.e., whether a regime conforms to the accepted norms of the international community. When considered together these elements help define a regime's legitimacy. A final point to make concerning legitimacy is that it is not an absolute. What may be considered as a legitimate form of government

Long-Term Dimensions Of The Sword Model

Military Actions Of Intervening Power

- Number of troops
- Types of action
- Primary operational objectives
- Unconventional operations

Support Actions Of Intervening Power

- Military support consistent
- Perceived strength of commitment
- Perceived length of commitment

Host Government Legitimacy

- Degree of domestic support
- Host government perceived as corrupt
- Government ability to motivate people
- Political violence considered common

Degree Of Outside Support To Insurgents

- Sanctuary available
- Insurgents isolated from sources of support
- Stage of war during which sanctuary is available to insurgents

Short-Term Dimensions Of The Sword Model

Actions Vs Subversion

- Pop Controls
- Psyops
- Intel Operations

Host Government Military Actions

- Discipline/Tng Regular Troops
- Willingness to take Officer casualties
- Aggressive patrolling

Unity of Effort

- Perception of IP interests
- Clarity of terms for settlement
- IP use of public diplomacy
- IP-HG Political polarity

Fig. 1. The "Sword Model". Source: Max G. Manwaring and John T. Fishel. "Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency Toward a New Analytical Approach." Small Wars and Insurgency. Vol 3, Winter 1992), pg. 284.

under one set of circumstances may be viewed as illegitimate at another point of time.

Analysis of the Cuban Revolution is particularly relevant in light of current instability in many parts of the world. The study of previous revolutionary movements, may lead us to a greater understanding of how to effectively combat the phenomenon. The evaluation of available tools such as the "Sword Model" may provide an effective approach for planning, and conducting, counter-insurgency as well as predicting their outcome.

The Cuban Environment

Revolution in Cuba is intriguing since the country was not an obvious "candidate" for violent, radical change. The elements of societal and economic instability normally associated with the rise of revolutionary movements were arguably less pronounced in Cuba than in other countries in the region that did not experience a successful revolution.⁵ Additionally, but of no less importance, was the traditionally stabilizing role of the United States on Cuban politics since independence from Spain. To appreciate events in Cuba during the 1950's one must begin with background information concerning the country, its people, their heritage, religion, political traditions, and economy.

(See Figure 2.)

Cuba, the largest island in the Caribbean, was "discovered" by Spain's Christopher Columbus in 1492. She quickly became the key colony of the New World due to her size, central location, fertile soil, and agreeable climate. The small indigenous population of Ciboney and Taino Indians, was quickly subjugated and eventually destroyed, by the combination of foreign disease, forced labor and mass suicides. Immigrants and slaves arrived in large numbers to seek their fortune in the colonies and work the land. The majority of the expeditions into Central and South America were provisioned from Cuba and the fabled treasure laden galleons used the island as an intermediate stop on their way back to Spain.⁶ Cuba became the jewel of the Spanish colonies in the New World.

As the former colonies slowly began to fight for and gain independence from Spain, Cuba became even more important as the center of Spanish influence in the New World. Spaniards continued to flock to the island to farm and establish business. As one of Spain's last vestiges of her glorious past she held a sentimental significance as well. This economic importance of Cuba combined with the relatively large number of Spanish immigrants contributed to Cuba remaining under Spanish control for over 70 years after

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Treaty of Paris ending Spanish American War	1 Oct. 1898
Spain withdraws from Cuba-U.S. admin.	1899-May 1901
Platt Amendment	1901
Presidency of Tomas Estrada Palma	May 1902-Sept 1906
U.S. Governor William Howard Taft/Charles Magoon (accused by some of corrupt, political practices) administer Cuba with help of U.S. troops	
Presidency of Jose Miguel Gomez	Sept 1906-Jan 1909
Independent Colored Union Uprising prompts dispatch of U.S. Marines	28 Jan 1909-20 May 1913
Presidency of Mario Garcia Menocal	1912
Liberal Revolt over Election fraud/U.S. Marines and diplomatic show of force	20 May 1913-21 May 1916
Second Term of Mario Garcia Menocal	1916
Presidency of Alfredo Zayas	1916-20 May 1921
Presidency of Gerardo Machado y Morales	20 May 1921-20 May 1925
Re-election of Gerardo Machado y Morales	20 May 1925-20 May 1929
Nationalist Uprising that topples Machado	20 May 1929-2 Aug. 1933
U.S. Secretary of State Welles and Revolutionary leaders appoint Carlos Manuel De Cespedes y Quesada as interim President	1930-1933
Sergeants revolt and Ramon Grau San Martin appointed provisional President	12 Aug. 1933-4 Sept. 1933
U.S. show of force	10 Sept. 1933
Sergeant/Colonel Batista deposes San Martin and installs U.S. Naval Academy graduate Carlos Hevia as provisional President followed by Carlos Mendieta	1933
	14 Jan 1934

Fig. 2. Critical Events in the History of the Cuban Republic. Source: DA-PAM 550-52, Cuba: A Country Study (Washington, DC: USGPO, March 1985), pg. 24-38.

Platt Amendment abrogated under Treaty of Relations	29 May 1934
Treaty of Reciprocity signed guaranteeing Cuba a share of U.S. sugar market	
Resignation of President Mendieta	Aug. 1934
Election of Miguel M. Gomez as President	11 Dec 1935
Impeachment of President Gomez engineered by Fulgencio Batista. Vice-President Federico Laredo Bru serves remainder of Gomez's term	May 1936
Election of Fulgencio Batista as President from the Communist Revolutionary Union Party	23 Dec 1936
Cuba declares War on the Axis Powers	10 Oct. 1940
Election of Ramon Grau San Martin as President	Dec 1941
Election of Carlos Prio Socarras as President	10 Oct. 1944
Golpe de Estado by Batista	10 Oct. 1948
Attack against Moncada Army Barracks by Castro	10 Mar 1952
Batista inaugurates himself as President	26 Jul. 1953
The Yacht Granma with Castro and 82 followers lands in Cuba	Feb. 1955
Revolutionary Student Directorate storms the presidential palace in assassination attempt	2 Dec 1956
U.S. Arms support withdrawn	13 Mar 1957
Alleged fraudulent election of Andres Rivero Aguero	Spring 1958
Batista goes into exile.	3 Nov. 1958
Chief Justice of the Cuban Supreme Court sworn in as interim President	1 Jan 1959
Castro enters Havana	8 Jan 1959

Fig. 2. Critical Events in the History of the Cuban Republic. (Continued.)

the rest of Spain's New World holdings gained independence.

Comparatively few in number, the early Spanish immigrants imported slaves, principally from Africa, to work the increasingly large plantations. Unlike many other colonizing nations, the Spanish did not consider inter-racial marriages nor the offspring from such marriages as second class citizens.⁷ The Spanish in Cuba had some intermarriage with the remaining native population as well as imported labor. The result was an integrated population composed of a majority of European heritage, a fairly large black minority and a small minority of mixed race (mulatto or mestizo). The problems of race that plagued North and portions of South America were never as pronounced in Cuba as a result.⁸

The Catholic Church, normally a unifying and stabilizing influence in Latin America politics, exerted less influence in Cuba than one would expect. Although the dominant religion was Roman Catholicism, most were only nominal adherents. The majority of these were concentrated in urban areas. The influence of the Catholic church was diminished in the countryside because of the relative lack of priests, together with the social and class differences between the priests and the country people. A small but growing number of Protestant adherents were making inroads

among the population. Indigenous religions brought by the slaves from Africa, of which Santeria is probably the best known, were fairly common in the countryside where there was less influence from Christian denominations and the people were less educated. The Masons were also well represented and influential in Cuba, counting such national heroes as Jose Marti and Antonio Maceo as former members. the context of these diverse religious and fraternal influences, the Catholic Church was politically weak. Religion in Cuban society constituted an insufficient unifying power and therefore was incapable of exerting a stabilizing influence on society.⁹

Cuba lacked a strong democratic tradition. The political traditions, transplanted by Spain to the New World, were feudal in nature. Government was strong, centralized and in the hands of a few. The idea of the "caudillo" as the strong, dynamic leader who would solve the public's problems was ingrained in the Cuban culture. As stated by Dr. Carlos Marquez Sterling, candidate for President of Cuba from the Free People's Party during the elections of 1958: "In the history of the island the point that stood out was the reliance on the caudillo as an expression of the Cuban intellect."¹⁰ The principles and traditions of a representative form of government were not

fostered under Spanish rule. When Cuba did finally gain independence in 1898, more than 70 years after the majority of the other Spanish colonies in the New World, her citizens were ill prepared to assume the responsibilities demanded of them in a democratic society. They continued to be attracted by a figure who would fulfill the ideal of a "caudillo."¹¹

Examination of Cuban politics during the period from independence to Castro reveals a trend of authoritarianism, corruption and untimely occasionally violent demise. Cuba underwent 19 changes of government during the intervening period from independence in 1899 until the Castro takeover in 1959. This represented 14 civilian governments with an average tenure of 3.1 years and 5 military/military appointed governments with an average tenure of 1.8 years. Seven uprisings, of which three were led by the military, contributed to this record (see Figure 3 and 4.)¹² This political turbulence was absent any direct intervention by the United States as permitted under the PLATT amendment. Democracy in Cuba had a poor track record. Her penchant for caudillos and acceptance of violence as a normal part of the political process provided a favorable climate for a successful insurgency.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Length</u>
Tomas Estrada Palma	20 May 1902-28 Sept. 1906	4 yrs 4 mos
Miguel Mariano Gomez	28 Jan 1909-20 May 1913	4 yrs 4 mos
Mario Garcia Menocal	20 May 1913-20 May 1921	8 yrs
Alfredo Zayas	20 May 1921- 20 May 1925	4 yrs
Gerardo Machado Morales	20 May 1925-12 Aug. 1933	8 yrs 3 mos
Carlos Manuel de Cespedes y Quezada	12 Aug. 1933-4 Sept. 1933	1 month
Ramon Grau San Martin	10 Sept. 1933-14 Jan 1934	4 mos
Manuel Marquez Sterling	14 Jan 1934-18 Jan 1934	4 days
Carlos Mendieta	18 Jan 1934-11 Dec 1935	1 yr 11 mos
Jose Barnet	11 Dec 1935-20 May 1936	7 mos
Miguel Gomez	20 May 1936-23 Dec 1936	7 mos
Fulgencio Batista	10 Oct. 1940-10 Oct. 1944	4 yrs
Ramon Grau San Martin	10 Oct. 1944-10 Oct. 1948	4 yrs
Carlos Prio Socarras	10 Oct. 1948-10 Mar 1952	3 yrs 5 mos

TOTAL CIVILIAN PRESIDENTS = 11

AVERAGE TIME IN OFFICE = 3.1 years

Fig. 3. Civilian Governments. Source: Carlos Marquez Sterling, Historia de la Isla de Cuba, (New York, NY: Regents Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), pg. 328-329.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Length</u>
General Alberto Herrera	12 Aug. 1933	1 day
Ramon Grau San Martin	10 Sept. 1933-14 Jan 1934	4 mos
Carlos Hevia	14 Jan 1934	1 day
Federico Laredo Bru	23 Dec 1936-10 Oct. 1940	3 yrs 10 mos
Fulgencio Batista	1952-1958	6 yrs 7 mos

TOTAL MILITARY GOVERNMENTS 5

AVERAGE TIME IN OFFICE 1.8 years

Fig. 4. Military Imposed Governments. Source: Carlos Marquez Sterling, Historia de la Isla de Cuba, (New York, NY: Regents Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), pg. 328-329.

Agriculture, manufacturing and tourism were the dominant forces in the pre-Revolutionary economy. The "zafra," or harvest of the sugar cane, and tobacco crops were major economic events around which much of the Cuban culture revolved. While agriculture was a dominant factor in Cuban industry, there were also other increasingly significant contributors to the Cuban economy. As quoted in the United States Department of Commerce issued study entitled, "Investment in Cuba" dated July 1956:

Subsistence living, so prevalent in many areas of Latin America, is not characteristic of Cuba, whose national income reflects the wage economy of the country. Compensation of employees represented from 56% to 61% of total national increase between 1946 and 1949 and from 59% to 65% between 1950 and 1954.

Cuban national income has reached levels which give the Cuban people one of the highest standards of living in Latin America. The economic and technical mission of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development stated in its report on Cuba, 1951:

The general impression of members of the mission, from observations in travels all over Cuba, is that living levels of farmers, agricultural laborers, industrial workers, storekeepers and others are higher all along the line than for corresponding groups in other tropical countries, and in nearly all other Latin America countries. This does not mean that there is no dire poverty in Cuba, but simply that in comparative terms Cubans are better off, on the average, than people of these other areas.¹³

During the 1950's an expansion in industry and tourism was underway. Three new petroleum refineries were

under construction as well as two tire installations, a copper-wire drawing mill capable by itself of meeting the country's needs, 5 paper/paper board manufacturing plants, a glass factory built by Owens-Illinois, and an aluminum plant built by Reynolds. Furthermore the large U.S. government owned Nicaro Nickel plant was under operation with a second plant under construction.¹⁴ These facilities, together with existing industrial plant and the well-known burgeoning tourist industry paint a favorable picture of a developing economy.¹⁵

Political, economic, social, cultural, and historical influences are major contributors to a country's political stability. As postulated in the "Sword Model," these factors define the legitimacy of a movement in the eyes of the country's citizenry and, by derivation, the likelihood of a movement's success or failure once international support is taken into account. The use of the "Sword Model" aids the orderly analysis of these complex, inter related factors. It is therefore an appropriate framework for this analyses.

Subordinate Questions

To adequately address the dimensions of the "Sword Model" in our analysis of counter-insurgency in Cuba during

the period 1952-1959, we must answer the following three subordinate questions:

1. Did Batista develop a counter-insurgency strategy? If so, what did it consist of, when was it developed and implemented and what portions of the strategy were effective?

2. What was the political, economic, social and international climate in which Batista operated during the period 1952-1959? Was there widespread dissatisfaction with existing conditions in Cuba?

3. What was the extent of outside support and influence provided to Batista's counter-insurgency program as well as to the insurgent forces?

Assumptions

Due to the fluid nature of revolutionary struggles, assumptions may adversely affect accurate analysis. Accordingly, the only assumption made in the course of this study is that Batista desired to remain in power. That he possessed the will/means to do so is then open to investigation.

Limits Of The Study

The focus of the analysis is Cuba during the period 1952-1958. While comparisons may be drawn between the Cuban Revolution and similar unrest experienced elsewhere during other periods, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to conduct in depth analyses of additional revolutionary struggles.

Literature Review

There is no shortage of information concerning the period of Cuban history from 1952-1958. First person accounts and analytical works by primary participants are widely circulated. Most notable among these are accounts from General Fulgencio Batista, U.S. Ambassador Earl T. Smith, Major Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Dr. Carlos Marquez Sterling. Newspaper and periodicals with articles by such influential columnists as Herbert Matthews of the New York Times are available in most libraries. The personal experiences of Cuban citizens, civilians as well as former soldiers from both sides, are also easily accessible. Cubans love to talk about politics and will readily offer their insights on the revolution; often regardless of whether one asks or not. Sworn testimonies before the various U.S. Government committees convened to analyze

U.S.-Cuba policy in the wake of Castro's seizure of power are further enlightening sources of information. Finally there are the numerous scholarly works of varying length and accuracy written by students of revolutionary war.

The large and diverse volume of readily available information presents the researcher with the problem of wisely choosing sources and accurately evaluating information. Since the Cuban revolution occurred geographically close to the United States during a period of extremes in domestic political thought, it generated a great amount of interest. Works produced during the 1960's are often unabashedly biased. One would expect that when reading a first person account by a key participant. That this tendency is frequently encountered in works by researchers who had no part in the revolution is more surprising and less defensible intellectually. Careful selection and evaluation of source material dealing with the emotionally charged issue of the revolution was essential.

To counteract the natural bias of authors as well as benefit from the diverse viewpoints and experiences represented in the body of available knowledge, several key works from across the political spectrum were studied in detail. These key works included: Cuba Betrayed by Fulgencio Batista, Dagger in the Heart; American Policy

Failures in Cuba by Dr. Mario Lazo, The Fourth Floor by Earl T. Smith former U.S. Ambassador to Cuba, Episodes of the Revolutionary War by Major Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Las Luchas Guerrilleras en Cuba by Colonel Ramon Barquin. These works represent the personal experiences of key participants in the revolutionary struggle, both Cuban and American. The authors also represent the three major political entities: Fulgencio Batista as leader of the Cuban government, Dr. Mario Lazo, a respected member of the Cuban Bar Association and Cuban-American society, Major Ernesto "Che" Guevara, revolutionary leader under Castro and Colonel Ramon Barquin, Cuban Army Officer and leader of the conspiracy of the "Pure Ones" against Batista in 1956.

Information from these key primary source works was supplemented with a combination of telephone and personal interviews of four Cubans now living in exile in the United States. These key informants represent different perspectives concerning the events that transferred in Cuba from 1952-1958 and include, a former professor at the University of Vilanova (Havana), a student leader at the University of Havana who became a lieutenant in Fidel's Army, an enlisted soldier in the Cuban Army who fought in the Sierra Maestra from 1957-1958 and a high school student who was later imprisoned by Fidel for anti-government

activities. The primary criteria in choosing each of them was the viewpoint needed to develop an understanding of the relevant events. Availability was a secondary issue. The Appendix contains more detailed biographical information on each of these key informants. Additional information gathered was analyzed against the above primary sources to ascertain consistency and veracity.

Trends

The body of available information concerning the Cuban revolution emphasizes the following causative factors:

1. Colonial history that emphasized a Spanish feudal model.
2. The respect for strong centralized authority embodied in the "caudillo" -lack of democratic tradition.
3. Economy heavily dependent upon one principal crop, sugar.
4. Economic/political influence of the United States - Platt Amendment.
5. Emerging middle class that was virtually disenfranchised.
6. Urban development versus rural underdevelopment.
7. Endemic history of political corruption.

In contrast, the various sources differ concerning the importance that they ascribe to the following:

1. Class turmoil.
2. Race turmoil.
3. Economic trends.
4. Extent of existing social welfare initiatives.
5. Sincerity of 26 of July Movement's intentions to establish representative government.
6. Insurgent/Counter-insurgent methods of gaining and maintaining popular support.
7. Degree of domestic popular support.
8. Role of international support¹⁶

It was in this last group that the most difficulty was encountered in discerning fact from fiction, objectivity from political dogma. Expressed views were normally divided into two camps, defending opinions at both extremes of the spectrum. The exceptions to this were typically found in studies produced by Latin American authors and those who studied the revolution several years after Castro's assumption of power. Latin American authors generally provided a more enlightened insight into the political, social, historical and economic factors of the revolution. This was especially evident when writing on such factors as Spanish colonial heritage and the Platt Amendment's effect

on the Cuban psyche. Likewise scholars who studied the revolution several years after the fact provided a standard of objectivity normally lacking in those works compiled and published at an earlier date.

The volume and tone of contemporary information available from newspaper and magazines was of significant importance in understanding public opinion and its effect on the revolution's outcome. The methods, emphasis and frequency of reporting reflected the interest of the public and their reaction to events unfolding in Cuba. Reporting by such influential writers as Herbert Matthews of the New York Times, arguably contributed to the forming of favorable international public opinion concerning the opposition movement in general and Castro in particular.¹⁷ Aside from this insight, such reporting tended to lack the objectivity present in more scholarly works.

The only area where available information is relatively sparse concerns the Cuban Armed Forces. During this period the Armed Forces were an organization in transition. U.S. military training was beginning under the auspices of the Military Defense Assistance Program (MDAP), the institution was becoming increasingly politicized by the nepotism of Batista and soldiers were sharply divided over their role in the new regime. Las Luchas Guerrilleras in

Cuba by Colonel Barquin and The Evolution of the Cuban Military: 1492-1968 by Fermoselle provide some important information as do Cuba Betrayed by Batista and Episodes of the Revolutionary War by Guevara. Additional insights are provided by Ambassador Smith in The Fourth Floor and in the personal interviews. Because of the transitional status of the Cuban Armed Forces and relative lack of information, analysis of the Cuban Armed Forces was difficult.

Available evidence indicates that all of the above listed factors contributed to the outcome of the revolution to a greater or lesser degree. The difficult task before us then is one of quantifying the extent to which each of the factors contributed to the outcome. This is where the "Sword Model" is useful; assisting us in understanding why Batista ultimately failed against the opposition, resulting in Cuba's plunge into a Marxist-Leninist government.

Endnotes

¹ DA Pam 550-52, Cuba: A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O., March 1985), pg. XIX-XXI.

² Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, Cuba: The Making of a Revolution (New York/London: WW Norton & Co., 1968), pg. 1.

³ Max G. Manwaring and John T. Fishel, "Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency: Toward a New Analytical Approach", Small Wars and Insurgency, Vol. 3 (Winter 1992), pg. 284-285.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart: American Policy Failures in Cuba (New York, Twin Circle Publishing Co., 1968), pg. 96-97.

⁶ DA PAM 550-52, pg. 3-6.

⁷ Maurice Zeitlin, Revolutionary Politics in the Cuban Working Class (New York, Evanstown, London: Harper & Row, 1970), pg. 70-71.

⁸ Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 14.

⁹ Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, Cuba: The Making of a Revolution, pg. 159-162.

¹⁰ Ibid., pg. 155.

¹¹ Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 15-18.

¹² DA PAM 550-52, pg. 24-38.

¹³ Earl E. T. Smith, The Forth Floor (New York: Random House, 1962), pg. 42-43.

¹⁴ Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 102.

¹⁵ Ruiz, Cuba: A Making of a Revolution, pg. 10.

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¹⁷ Guevara, Episodes of the Revolutionary War, pg. 37, 52-55.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The period from 10 March 1952 to 1 January 1959 was characterized by political intrigue that included the formation, dissolution, and shift of political loyalties; terrorism (government as well as insurgent sponsored); and open warfare between government and insurgent forces. The period culminated with President Fulgencio Batista's resignation in favor of Justice Manuel Piedra of the Cuban Supreme Court in accordance with the Constitution of 1940. A common theme of this tumultuous period was the issue of legitimacy, with different meanings. For large portions of the citizenry, legitimacy often meant a representative form of government as stipulated in the Constitution of 1940, as well as a regime's competence in dealing with the Republic's problems and the absence of widespread corruption. Loyalty to the Constitution of 1940 and promises to deliver a more honest responsive government were voiced by all major political participants as evidence that they supported legitimate government. To Batista, however, legitimacy revolved around his vision of who was most capable of

implementing social and economic reform for the betterment of Cuba. He clearly believed that he was the most qualified for this responsibility and was willing to betray the ideals embodied in the Constitution of 1940, which he co-authored, in order to seize and maintain power. The critical events of this tumultuous period are best analyzed in a chronological framework beginning with Batista's seizure of power, the formation of opposition groups, and concluding with the armed confrontation between government and opposition forces.

On 10 March 1952, former President Batista seized power from the serving President, Prío Socarras, in a relatively bloodless "Golpe de Estado." This action was ostensibly motivated by the numerous allegations of fraud raised against the Prío government and suspicions that Prío planned his own "Golpe de Estado" to assure the installation of his preferred presidential candidate, U.S. Naval Academy Graduate Carlos Hevia.¹ Batista's justification for the "Golpe de Estado" is open to debate when analyzed closely. A respected impartial observer voiced the opinion held by many that Batista, "Convinced that he would lose the election, engineered a successful and almost bloodless coup d'etat."² Regardless of Batista's rationale, public

reaction to the takeover was stunned disbelief.³ While President Prío had accomplished more than the previous presidents in implementing the provisions of the Constitution of 1940, his administration was marred by widespread gangsterism, violence and corruption.⁴ His previous distinguished revolutionary record was tarnished by his attraction to the benefits that derived from politics.⁵ As happened often to Cuban politicians he began to look upon public office as more a spoil's system than a public trust.⁶ The lack of immediate, strong public reaction to the "Golpe de Estado" was attributable to a combination of disgust with Prío and hopes that Batista would bring improvement. Batista promised to restore law and order and reduce corruption. In his previous administration he had demonstrated a sincere concern for the betterment of Cuba that was still vivid in the public's mind.⁷

Batista's Allies

Batista's most powerful allies included the factions that had benefited the most during his first regime 1933-1944. Organized labor, and business as well as many workers and campesinos welcomed him. They remembered his enlightened thought as codified in the Constitution of 1940

and his relatively clean administration that emphasized law and order. Others, who had hopes that Cuba would mature into a full democracy, saw Batista's action as a regression which threatened the whole democracy. Political factions that were content to participate in the election of 1952 now began to look outside of the political process for re-dress of their grievances.⁸

Internationally, foreign governments were quick to recognize the Batista government. Within days, over twenty major Latin American and European governments had recognized the Batista regime. The United States only tarried two weeks.⁹ Many members of the international community viewed Batista as a faithful and loyal friend. Batista was anxious to cement these relationships by supporting U.S. foreign policy and promising a stable investment environment. He severed relations with the Soviet Union and signed a mutual assistance pact with the United States. These steps were taken in spite of the possible reaction by Cuban nationalists.¹⁰

Within Cuba, Batista sought to quickly consolidate his hold on power with a two pronged strategy that met with only limited success. He solidified support among the "traditionally" influential elements of society while

encouraging division between his various political opponents and enacting legislation that promoted the splintering of the opposition vote.¹¹ Regrettably, he made only token attempts to address the roots of popular disaffection with his regime --the lack of representative government. When Batista finally held presidential elections in November 1954 in an effort to legitimize his regime, all of the major opposition parties refused to participate because it was widely believed that the elections would be rigged in favor of Batista. Roughly 47% of the population also refused to participate in the election which was marred by numerous irregularities. Batista, as the only candidate, was elected President; however, the election did nothing to legitimize his regime.¹² The opposition exploited this error in strategy with increasing effectiveness as they attacked the legitimacy of the Batista regime.

The traditionally influential elements of Cuban society included the Army, labor, business, and agriculture. Internationally the most influential element of Cuban society was the United States. Batista's relationship with each of these elements was relatively strong and based upon a long record of mutual co-operation.¹³ He quickly moved to solidify support for his regime from these critical

factions.

The Army, as the original source of his rise to power, remained loyal with the two notable exceptions of the "Rebellion of the Pure Ones" in 1956 and the Naval Rebellion of 1957. Batista had maintained strong links with the Army in the period since his previous presidency. Upon taking power in 1952, he further strengthened these links by appointing political cronies to key positions and providing for the welfare of service members. In fact, many of the officers owed their positions to Batista. Some of them were promoted from the enlisted to the officer ranks following the Sergeants rebellion of 1933 led by "Sgt." Batista. Others had been promoted while Batista served as Chief of the Army.

As a former enlisted man, Batista did not forget his roots nor did the enlisted men who saw in Batista the hope for upward social mobility. Pay, working conditions, medical facilities, and opportunities for advancement had all improved for the Army during Batista's previous tenure in power. The Armed Forces, which had suffered from stagnation prior to the Sergeant's revolt of 1933, had improved in professionalism and status.¹⁴ Soldiers were well aware that these were a direct result of Batista's initiatives.

Labor, business, and agriculture also benefited from Batista's seizure of power principally through the implementation of forward-looking social legislation, extensive public works projects, and promises of political stability. His achievements included:

1. Implementation of most of the provisions of the Constitution of 1940 by fundamental decree with the exception of those providing for representative government.

2. Moved against the communists forcing them to go underground.

3. Built a reliable water system for Havana.

4. Created the Sugar Stabilization Fund to prevent economic collapse after the Korean War.

5. In May 1955 declared amnesty for political prisoners to include Fidel and Raul Castro.

6. Established a long range Economic and Social Development Plan which allocated 350 million dollars over 4 years. Agricultural improvements included large storage and refrigeration facilities, irrigation and fertilization programs incentives for crop diversification and agrarian reform.

7. Established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to provide low cost housing for the poor.

8. Funded extensive road improvements.¹⁵

Batista's Opposition

Political opposition to Batista was initially organized around existing political parties that were denied participation in the government after the "Golpe de Estado." The Partido Revolucionario Cubano (Autentico) led by Prio Socarras and the Partido del Pueblo Cubano (Ortodoxo) led by Eduardo Chibas and after his death by Roberto Agramonte dominated this segment. The latter counted a young revolutionary Fidel Castro as a member. Additionally, the University student groups exerted significant impact. The Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) led by Professor Rafael Garcia Barcena, the Triple A (AAA) led by Aureliano Sanchez Arango, and the Federacion Estudiantil Universitaria (FEU) led by Jose Antonio Echevarria formed the principal student opposition.¹⁶ The opposition was further subdivided into those who wished to work within the current political framework to achieve change and those who wished to employ extra-legal methods.

The formation of a united opposition movement from such a diverse group was a major problem from the start. Their common desire to replace Batista was the only element that united them. While outwardly proclaiming support for the Constitution of 1940, their real motives and methods were as diverse as the backgrounds of the people who

comprised each group. At first, the established political parties desired as much as possible to work within the framework of the existing political system to effect changes. As the possibility for change within the system diminished, "splinter" groups began to form and extra-legal methods were adopted. Ex-President Prío's actions typified this transformation.¹⁷

The more idealistic groups, typified by the university groups, were quicker to adopt extra-legal methods. To better support these new tactics, splinter groups were spawned, using experienced members of the traditional university groups as cadre. The most notable and effective of these militant groups included the following:

- Directorio Revolucionario (DR) founded by Jose Antonio Echevarria in 1955 as a student insurrectionary instrument to despise Batista. Political violence was adopted by this group as an acceptable means of toppling Batista. The DR allied itself with the M-26-7 although neither one considered themselves subordinate to the other. Initially operated primarily in Havana but in 1957 the group established the "Escambray front."

- Movimiento 26 de Julio (M-26-7) founded by Fidel Castro in 1955 and composed of young Ortodoxos as well as members of the MNR and ANR groups. One of the first opposition groups to adopt violent tactics to depose Batista. Eventually became the dominant group in the Batista opposition.

- Accion Nacional Revolucionario (ANR) founded by Frank Pais and Pepito Tey in 1954-1955. One of several underground organizations against Batista.

- Movimiento Socialista Revolucionario (MSR) founded by Rolando Masferrer a former member of the

Cuban Communist Party (PSP) and veteran of the Spanish Civil War. Because of Masferrer's hatred of Castro he later entered into a marriage of convenience with Batista. The organization was known for its extreme tactics and became a symbol to many of Batista's political repression.

- Frente Obrero Nacional (FON) founded in 1957 by Frank Pais as a political organization to mobilize workers in support of the revolution.

- Union Insurreccional Revolucionaria (UIR) founded by Emilio Tro, former W.W.II U.S. paratrooper.

The final category of political groups of note are those that sought a peaceful solution to Cuba's political situation. These included:

- Movimiento de Liberacion Radical founded by Andres Valdespino in the mid 1950s as a political organization dedicated to solving Cuba's political instability.

- Sociedad de Amigos de la Republica founded by Cuban War of Independence hero Col. Cosme de la Torriente in 1954 for the purpose of opening a dialogue between Batista and all opposition groups in order to peacefully resolve political differences. Several promising peace plans were developed but all were eventually sabotaged by one or more participating factions.¹⁸

Constraints

Each faction involved in the struggle for power during the period in question was governed by a different set of constraints. These defined the manner in which each faction sought to gain or maintain supremacy in the struggle for power. The number and extent of constraints under which each faction toiled differed widely as did their effects;

but they are generally divisible into the three major categories of self imposed, those imposed by national law, and those imposed by international forces.

Self-imposed constraints were those adopted by a faction due to custom, desire to influence certain audiences or values of the group members. The actions of the Sociedad de Amigos de la Republica founded by Col. Cosme de La Torriente in 1954 provides us with an example of a political group which operated under the self imposed constraint of peaceful, neutrality while attempting to mediate a resolution to the political crisis. The members of Sociedad de Amigos de la Republica arranged meetings on various occasions between opposition factions and Batista in an attempt to save the Republic by diffusing the increasingly violent situation.¹⁹

Castro's M-26-7 movement provides a further example of self imposed constraints. Castro enforced a strict set of regulations upon his forces and upon people in those areas over which he exerted control. These regulations, which were eventually codified, governed the conduct of insurgent forces, punishments, rewards, and administration of occupied areas. Under the government regime equal treatment was not common. In contrast the insurgents emphasized equal treatment under the revolutionary law.²⁰

Constraints imposed by law exerted influence upon the various factions to the extent that a faction was willing or forced to comply. Fair play and the derived element of legitimacy in the eyes of the populace were key motivations for a group's adherence to law. In the case of the Batista regime, national law was frequently employed as an element of repression against the opposition. Constitutional guarantees were suspended and martial law was invoked in his efforts to quell the opposition. Opposition groups would often react to this tactic by calling into question the legality of the Batista regime's actions both in the national as well as international arena.²¹

International constraints were those imposed both by international law and international opinion. By their very nature they affected the Batista regime, more than the opposition movement, because of its status as the recognized government. U.S. and international laws governing the sale and controlling the use of weapons/personnel in counter-insurgency greatly restricted the Batista regime's struggle to survive. As stated by former Ambassador E.T. Smith in The Fourth Floor:

In addition to the suspension of the shipment of arms to Cuba, the State Department was bringing additional pressure to bear on the Government of Cuba by calling to its attention the violation of the provisions of the Military Defense Assistance Program

with Cuba which stated that the use of military equipment for any other purpose than hemispheric defense must have prior consent of the United States. . . .Upon instructions from the State Department, I informed Prime Minister Guell that my government expected all Military Defense Assistance Program equipped and trained personnel to be recalled from fighting the revolutionaries.²²

In general, international constraints affected the Batista regime more than the opposition movement. In order to reinforce his claim as the legitimate Government of Cuba, Batista was pressured to comply with the law. When the Batista regime failed to apply the law fairly or suspended the law altogether, it lost prestige. The opposition, though, only had to demonstrate that the Batista regime was not complying with the law to enhance its position. Further, since the opposition movements were not in power, they could offer a variety of politically attractive solutions to the country's ills without having to worry about their implications nor the difficulties involved in their implementation.

Confrontation

Politically, Batista attempted to fragment his opposition while fostering a mirage of representative government. The numerous public works projects and social initiatives that he implemented addressed many of the issues

that the opposition movement accused him of ignoring. Batista established a Consultative Council in January 1955 representing people from all sectors of the Cuban public. Advertised as an interim legislative measure pending national elections, the body passed numerous bills that dealt primarily with social and economic policies.²³ By resolving selected key issues of interest groups, he hindered the growth of organized discontent against the regime.

Batista supplemented this tactic by pitting opposition groups against each other and exploiting quarrels within the opposition to his advantage. His use of Communist informants to neutralize key members of the DR in Havana from 1957 to June 1958 was a prime example of this.²⁴ Batista further weakened the opposition by enacting a series of electoral laws that favored the incumbent party. Prior to the election of November 1954, he eliminated the requirement that a party have a minimum number of registered voters in order to participate in an election. Groups no longer had to band together in a coalition to field a political candidate. He also refused to allow a direct vote for candidates and placed limits on the freedom of expression of those running against government candidates.²⁵

The end result of these machinations was a facade of representative government that did little to satisfy any of Batista's opposition. He became categorized by the public as another national leader who forsook the interests of the country for personal benefit.

As Batista continued actions to consolidate his power through political patronage and promises of representative elections, the opposition grew. Exile groups met in Montreal in June 1953 to formulate a strategy to depose Batista but failed to develop firm plans.²⁶

Terrorism increased as the various political rivals exacted vengeance upon one another.²⁷ On 26 July 1953 a young revolutionary named Fidel Castro led a group of approximately 97 men in an attack against the Moncada Army barracks. The attackers were defeated after a short fight. They fled in disarray and were captured. Castro's life was spared by the intervention of the Catholic Bishop Perez-Serrantes of Santiago who surrendered him to authorities only after receiving guarantees for his safety.

The importance of the action lies not in the lack of military achievement but in that it gave birth to the 26 of July Movement and propelled its leader into limelight. At his trial on 16 October 1953, Castro delivered his famous speech "History will absolve me." This helped to establish

him in the mind of the Cuban public as an idealistic romantic in the tradition of Latin American revolutionaries.²⁸

In 1954 Batista staged an election in a further attempt to establish his legitimacy. All major political parties boycotted the elections in protest. Batista emerged victorious and was inaugurated as President on 25 February 1955.²⁹ Instead of quelling the opposition and legitimizing his regime, the elections were viewed as a hardening of Batista's position against representative government. Opposition groups multiplied in number and began to undertake more decisive measures against the regime.

As political pressure increased, Batista pursued a policy of dialogue with the moderate factions of the opposition. In 1956 he met with leaders of the Ortodoxos, Autenticos and Priistas but the talks were fruitless because the opposition demanded nothing short of the government's resignation.³⁰ He also met with high ranking members of the Church³¹ and the U.S. Ambassador on numerous occasions in an attempt to achieve a peaceful solution.³²

While political dialogue was occurring Batista continued pressure upon the opposition. The results of this strategy were unfavorable and unexpected. In his book Cuba

Betrayed, Batista said:

. . . any suspension of constitutional guarantees was always preceded by national clamor for such action.³³

As the crimes and cruelties of the terrorists grew, so did the necessary repressive measures. New excesses would take place, followed by another wave of slogan propaganda. Public sensibility would be offended and corrective action would be the responsibility of the Batista government (always in his name) and not in that of the provocateurs, bosses who acted as an insatiable Moloch or the agents who executed their orders.³⁴ Ultimately the cycle of increasing violence worked against Batista.

The opposition parties in general lacked a coherent strategy. This was mainly as a result of their diversity. Groups which shared a common ideology and methodology would often band together. The case of Movimiento 26 de Julio, Directorio Revolucionario, Organizacion Autentica, Union Insurreccional Revolucionario, Accion Nacional Revolucionaria and Frente Obrero Nacional conspiring together for the violent overthrow of the Batista regime in the mid 1950's is just one obvious example.³⁵ While the groups listed above cooperated with each other by coordination of activities, transfer of funds and sharing of personnel, they were not always in agreement as to actions and methods. The failure of Castro's general strike declaration in April 1958 is a prime example of differences of opinions between factions of the anti-Batista coalition.

By not enlisting the DR's support for the strike beforehand, support in the critical province of Havana was missing. The DR had wanted power to make certain political appointments in the future revolutionary government. Castro refused to delegate this authority to any other organization, demanding instead that all revolutionary groups acknowledge him as their sole leader.³⁶ The strike was doomed from the beginning without the support of the DR.

The Batista regime had available to counter the insurgency a military of sufficient size, training and equipment to deal with any foreseeable threat. This did not insure its success against the insurgency that it faced from 1952-1958. It was an organization ill trained/led for counter-insurgency employment and increasingly politicized. Most importantly, the institution's ties with the public were weakened when it assumed the role of palace guard.

The Army was composed of approximately 45,000 men, most of whom were campesinos unable to find work elsewhere or drawn by the opportunity for upward mobility in society. Surprisingly the officer corps included a number of campesinos in high ranking positions as a direct result of Batista's influence.³⁷ This force was supported by a small coastal navy and light air force and supplemented with a Rural Guard. While armed with obsolete equipment that

included 1903 model Springfield rifles, artillery, and machine guns of First World War vintage, the insurgent force initially was even more poorly armed.³⁸

Military garrisons were distributed throughout the country with several fairly large bases located in the major cities. Camp Columbia in Havana and Moncada barracks in Santiago were the principal Cuban military installations. These were supplemented with numerous small detachments of approximately 15 men located throughout the countryside.³⁹ The effectiveness of the system depended heavily upon the initiative of small unit leaders and timely accurate intelligence provided by the Servicio de Inteligencia Militar (SIM), an element that was feared throughout Cuba and effective until the end of the Batista regime.⁴⁰

Though formidable on paper the Cuban Army was not without weakness. Chief among these was that the Army's troops lost their affiliation with the public. They began to view themselves as a ruling elite and their fellow campesinos as the enemy.⁴¹ This often resulted in the abuse of campesinos causing alienation of the very people upon whom they were dependent upon for support/intelligence. The insurgents were able to turn this to their advantage with effective propaganda and consistent, fair treatment of the

public. When discussing the comparative treatment of prisoners following an engagement, Bonachea in The Cuban Insurrection stated:

An essential difference between the insurrectionists and Batista's Army, as this incident illustrates, was the way each dealt with its prisoners. The regular troops would in time be profoundly affected psychologically by the difference in human values between their commanders and their enemies, the guerrillas.⁴²

Corruption and poor leadership were additional key weakness in the Cuban Army. In an interview conducted by Stanley Moss of the Diario de Nueva York, former guerrilla Captains Rodriguez Tamayo and Olivera stated that: "Many battles won by the rebels were fought with ammo purchased from Army officers."⁴³ Treasonous acts committed by some officers were often supplemented with timidity/incompetence of leaders. In the second guerrilla attack against Moncada barracks in Santiago on 30 Nov. 1956, the numerically superior government forces were satisfied with defending their barracks. In effect, they ceded control of the town which they were supposed to protect from the guerrillas.⁴⁴

Despite these weakness, Army units demonstrated courage and resourcefulness in many instances. The attack against Castro's landing force at Playa Colorada/Alegria del Pino on 2-5 December 1956 by the Army was a joint action,

combining naval, air, and ground forces to locate and destroy the bulk of the force. The operations included patrols and ambushes designed to block Castro's escape into the Sierra Maestra.⁴⁵ These were supplemented with the dropping of psyops pamphlets to coax the insurgents into surrendering.⁴⁶ The defense of the town of Yaguajay in the final days of the Batista regime by Cuban Army Capt. Abon Ly with 150 men against a guerrilla force of over 450 men provides proof of Army tenacity when properly led. The siege lasted 11 days, ending only when the soldiers ran out of ammunition and when they were convinced that no reinforcements were forthcoming.⁴⁷ These actions demonstrated that the Cuban Army, when properly led, could operate effectively.

While the Army was initially effective against the insurgents it proved incapable of modifying its tactics to deal with a changing political situation. Because of popular discontent with the government's heavy handed tactics, the insurgency began to grow in strength. In March of 1957 Major Castro Reyes recommended a change of strategy that included isolation of Castro and cessation of direct attacks. He postulated that Castro was drawing strength by conducting ambushes against the Army.⁴⁸ This suggestion was

rejected. The Army continued "search and destroy" missions but gradually shifted to a defensive posture as morale decreased and casualties mounted. As stated by Batista "at the beginning of autumn 1958 through negligence, through complicity, for financial gain or through fear or cowardice, Army units frequently surrendered to rebel groups."⁴⁹

Ambassador E.T. Smith adds further insight into the state of the Cuban Army by December 1958 in his book The Fourth

Floor:

Although it is true that the rebels never won a military victory and were only successful in seizing military outposts and in winning skirmishes, by December 1958 the will to resist on the part of the Cuban Army was rapidly vanishing. The Army would not fight. Desertions to the Castro rebels increased. The top command of the Cuban Army believed their cause was lost.⁵⁰

Had the Cuban high command adopted appropriate tactics to deal with the changing situation, military defeat may have been delayed or averted.

In the face of Batista's actions the opposition was polarized into two major groups; those that wished to achieve change within the political system and those that sought change through violent means. Many of those who originally sought a peaceful solution adopted more violent means as the Batista regime became more intransigent. The fraudulent elections of 1955 and 1958 extinguished their

hope that Batista would relinquish power voluntarily

For the groups more predisposed to violence, opposition to Batista began slowly and deliberately. Organizational infrastructure, inter-group coordination, financial and equipment sources were all required. Following this, the country entered a period of de-stabilization that was primarily centered in the cities and later extended into the countryside. Large scale coordinated when bombings paralyzed all night time activities leading to many arrests, tortures, and executions of rebel followers. The goal was to establish a climate conducive to insurrection. Political instability and social paralyzes provoked by violence were key to this. If the public could not be converted to the cause, the insurgents at least wanted to insure neutrality.⁵¹ In the country side, insurgents conducted raids and ambushes against Army outposts and patrols. Initially their purpose was to gain supplies/equipment, aid recruitment and harass the Cuban Army. Later the attacks grew in size, frequency and audacity until the insurgency was actually able to deny the Army free movement in areas. Ambassador Smith described the transition as follows:

For a time, the Castro revolutionaries acted more like irresponsible hoodlums than like a well directed organization. By the fall of 1958, the revolutionaries

appeared to be receiving professional advice on how to disrupt the economy of Cuba; i.e. destroying the main arteries of transportation by blowing up bridges and dislocating principal highways, blowing up railroad tracks and attacking railroad trains. . . . the change from casual attacks to a well directed campaign was surprising.⁵²

In the final stage, that of open confrontation between insurgents and government forces, relatively large well-trained/armed insurgents attacked large army camps, conducted large ambushes and gained control over ever increasing areas of the country. When the insurgents experienced temporary setbacks, as occurred in the summer of 1958, they retreated into the Sierra Maestra. This forced the Army to separate itself from its line of supply, making it vulnerable to counter attack.⁵³

To further increase pressure upon the government, the insurgents opened a "second front". Two major groups operated in the Sierra Escambray. The largest of these was the Segundo Frente Nacional de Escambray under the leadership of Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo and composed of a large campesino following. The former American soldier William Morgan was a member of this group, eventually attaining the rank of major, the highest rebel rank. This group later broke from Castro and became Alpha '66, famous to this day for its anti-Castro activities.⁵⁴

The second group was under the leadership of the DR, a group composed primarily of urban guerrillas. This group had a heavy "Autentico" influence but lacked a definite ideology and was less disciplined than M-26-7 operating in Oriente. Although they fought well and remained within the organized opposition movement, they were ultimately unable to provide a moderating influence on events in the Post Batista regime.⁵⁵

During the second Batista regime of 1952-1958, the Cuban Republic was engaged in a struggle for political determination. To many, Batista represented a failed democratic experiment. A broad based opposition formed with the common goal of ousting Batista. Lacking any other common goals or ideals, the opposition failed to develop a strategy for ensuring the restoration of democracy once Batista was deposed. The resulting power vacuum provided the ideal opportunity for seizure of power by the most disciplined and ruthless of the opposition leaders, Fidel Castro.

While primarily a political struggle, military and para-military organizations became increasingly critical in the insurgency as each faction became less amenable to a political solution. Even though the Batista regime had overwhelming military/para-military superiority, the

opposition was more skillful in its integration of the armed insurgency into the overall strategy to depose Batista.

Their astute use of both international and national propaganda, unrelenting pressure against the government in the cities and countryside and their careful cultivation of popular support were their recipe for success.

Endnotes

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³ Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, Cuba: The Making of a Revolution (New York/London: WW. Norton & Co., 1968), pg. 110.

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- ²⁵ Ibid., pg. 29-30.
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CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS

The causes of any insurgency are complex. Numerous factors exert varying influence upon a movement throughout its lifetime. Analysis of a government's efforts to control an insurgency must identify and quantify the factors contributing to a insurgent movement. As stated in Chapter 1, this study will use the "Sword Model" as a framework for analysis of the Batista government's efforts to control the insurgency it faced during the period 1952-1958. The results of the analysis indicate that the Batista regime was weak in all seven dimensions of the "Sword Model".

The dimensions which exert primarily long term impact are Military Actions of the Intervening Power (MAIP), Support Actions of the Intervening Power (SAIP), Host Government Legitimacy (HGL), and Degree of Outside Support to Insurgents (DOSI). Because these factors are by nature of long term impact, they tended to exert a more subtle influence. Each factor required a significant amount of time to implement and a significant period of time was required before the effects of implementation, positive or

negative were evident. The dimensions which exert primarily short term impact are; Actions versus Subversion (AVS), Host Government Military Actions (HGMA), and Unity of Effort (UOE). Because these factors are by nature of immediate, short term impact, they tended to exert a more obvious initial influence. While this might cause some to overrate their contribution to the counter-insurgency effort, the study by Dr. Manwaring that developed the "Sword Model" found that these dimensions were not statistically significant individually. This lack of statistical significance should give pause to those who would misinterpret them.¹

Analysis of the Long-Term Dimensions

In addressing the dimensions involving an intervening power, MAIP and SAIP, we must first identify potential intervening powers. The United States, by virtue of its proximity and traditional influence in Cuban affairs, is an obvious candidate for consideration. The Soviet Union, by virtue of expansionist interests during the super-power struggle of the period, is another candidate. When addressing the Soviet Union, communist proxies are also included. The final intervening power to consider is the Dominican Republic. The feud between the Trujillo

dictatorship in the Dominican Republic and the Batista regime in Cuba was long lived. Numerous accusations of intervention in each other's affairs, many with basis in fact, were hurled by both dictators against each other during the period in question.²

Military Actions of the Intervening Power

The dimension of Military Actions of the Intervening Power (MAIP) encompasses the following elements; number of troops, types of action, primary operational objectives and unconventional operations. In analyzing counter-insurgency in Cuba during this period it was determined that this dimension exerted the least influence on the eventual outcome.

There is little evidence of direct military action by the United States in Cuba during the period. A military advisory group of 31 personnel was assigned to Cuba. Their activities were focused on in-country training of the Cuban Armed Forces in accordance with the Military Defense Assistance Program (MDAP). This treaty, signed with Cuba in 1952 under the regime of President Prío, was to aid the Cuban Armed Forces in providing for the common defense of the hemisphere. The use of forces trained and equipped under this treaty were prohibited from participating in

activities other than hemispheric defense.³

Counter-insurgency and internal security were not considered appropriate missions for troops trained and equipped under this pact. In fact, the Cuban insurgents were able to mobilize an effective propaganda campaign in the U.S. and abroad alleging that Batista was using the benefits of this pact to advantage in his counter-insurgency efforts. The political pressure resulting from this propaganda ultimately contributed to the withdrawal of all U.S. military support from the Batista regime.⁴ As stated by U.S. Ambassador to Cuba Mr. E.T. Smith:

At a meeting with the mission chiefs, I requested that they avoid all publicity and to be sure not to have their pictures taken in connection with arms which were in Cuba under the Military Defense Assistance Program. I emphasized the necessity that all of their activities be guided with the utmost discretion, as the State Department was under great pressure from the Cuban revolutionaries regarding the activities of our missions. The State Department informed the Cuban exiles that the American missions in Cuba were serving a useful purpose and were living up to the provisions of the Treaty, under which they were established, which was to assist the Government of Cuba in the training of their military forces for hemispheric defense. Also all mission personnel, including the attaches, were reminded not to be near combat areas. Otherwise the United States would be accused of actively aiding and abetting the government forces.⁵

Direct military intervention by the other intervening powers, the Soviet Union and the Dominican Republic, is also

difficult to establish. No evidence was encountered of the Batista opposition receiving direct assistance from the Soviet Union, although there exists ample evidence of participation in the opposition by foreign nationals of leftist ideology.

There is also little evidence that the Dominican Republic participated directly in military actions in support of the Batista government. The government of Trujillo did support Batista in 1958 with weapons, but only after the United States refused to sell military equipment to the Cuban government.⁶ In general, there was little love between the governments of Batista and Trujillo. Relations between the two governments were marked by the trading of numerous accusations against each other alleging direct efforts at de-stabilization.

There exists little evidence of direct military support to either Batista or the opposition outside of the efforts of the U.S. military training mission provided under the terms of the Military Defense Assistance Program. This training was not conducted with counter-insurgency operations in mind although many of the skills were undoubtedly transferable to such operations. Further, the conduct of the U.S. military training mission was closely monitored by the U.S. government as well as the Batista

opposition to ensure that the terms of the treaty were strictly complied with.⁷ There is little doubt that if violations did occur, they were of a minor nature and therefore inconsequential to the final outcome.

When the effect of negative propaganda and limited utility of foreign military personnel are considered, the dimension of Military Actions of the Intervening Power must be assessed as -1, contributing negatively to the counter-insurgency efforts.

Support Actions of the Intervening Power (SAIP)

When addressing the Support Actions of the Intervening Power (SAIP), consistency of support, strength of commitment and length of commitment are key. In this dimension, unlike MAIP, each of the intervening powers participated, with the greatest impact coming from the efforts of the United States.

In the case of the United States, military support was consistent and of a low level until 1958. This support primarily consisted of the training actions of the U.S. military mission and provision of military supplies/equipment. In both cases the support was administered under the terms of Military Defense Assistance Program.

In 1958 this support was withdrawn, although the members of the Military mission remained until the early part of the Castro regime. The effect of this withdrawal of military support was psychologically and militarily debilitating to the counter-insurgency effort. Batista described its effect:

The embargo on arms declared by the United States in March 1958, caught the Armed Forces with obsolete equipment, 1903-model repeating rifles and cannons and machine guns of the First World War. We had recourse to the Garand rifles which were being discarded by the American Army. But the very first and only shipment of 1950 Garands was seized on the piers of New York.⁸

The effect of the arms embargo in a broader sense was best summed up by the following quote from the report of Senate Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary:

"When in March 1958," wrote Betty Kirk in The Nation, "shipment of military supplies to Batista was canceled. . . this was a signal, understood by all, that the dictator was on his way out and Castro was in."⁹ It was evident that the withdrawal of U.S. military support, materially degraded the Cuban Army and reduced its morale, it also sent an unequivocal message of the U.S. government's stance with regard to Batista and the opposition movement. While Batista was ultimately able to obtain limited military support from countries, such as Nicaragua and the Dominican

Republic,¹⁰ against the efforts of the U.S. government,¹¹ the damage to his prestige and the Army's morale was irreparable.¹²

The capriciousness of the U.S. government extended to political support as well as military support. The U.S. government supported Batista, despite the manner in which he assumed power, for several different reasons. Batista was a known commodity. He was pro-U.S. and had proven a stabilizing force in previously turbulent eras. His promise of honest elections added further palatability to his regime.¹³ As his regime continued in power, internal opposition mounted and Batista was forced to use increasingly repressive measures to maintain his hold in power. These actions made it difficult for the U.S. government to continue justifying its support for Batista despite the economic stability and pro-U.S. and anti-Communist stance that Batista offered. Support declined steadily until 1958 when the U.S. government effectively ceased support for Batista and began considering alternatives. As stated by Ambassador E.T. Smith: "March 12, 1958 is an important date in Cuban history. After that date it was no longer possible to gender any support in the State Department for the Batista Government."¹⁴

The support that Batista received from the Somoza government of Nicaragua and the Trujillo government of the Dominican Republic can best be characterized as like forms of government banding together in common defense. As authoritarian regimes, they shared many of the same weaknesses to include common enemies and friends. However, relations were not always cordial between the dictators. Batista had at one time feared an attack by Trujillo's forces and it is conjectured that Dominican agents may have aided the Cuban opposition in the early part of the Batista regime.¹⁵ Perhaps each one realized that a successful revolution against one regime could provide the blueprints for successful actions against their own regimes. The fickleness of their common influential neighbor to the north, as amply demonstrated by the U.S. actions toward Batista, was also undoubtedly a major concern. They no doubt came to the conclusion that if they could not put aside their differences and rely on each other, they might find themselves without any measurable external support when they faced their own difficulties.

The level of support provided to Batista by Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic was of limited effect. Batista did not actively search for sources of military supplies/equipment other than the U.S. until 1958. By then

the supply situation of the Cuban Armed Forces was becoming grave. The quality and quantity of equipment that these countries were able to provide was limited since they were not arms producers. Equipment at their disposal was dated and in many cases acquired from more developed countries as they were modernizing their armed forces. Further, the damage to Batista's reputation and the morale of the Cuban Army once the U.S. withdrew support, could not be remedied by the potpourri of equipment acquired from these new sources.

When the sporadic nature, size, and terms of international support to Batista are weighed, one must conclude that SAIP worked against Batista's counter-insurgency efforts. The U.S., as a traditional supporter of the Cuban armed forces, withdrew support at a critical phase in the counter-insurgency and largely succeeded in preventing the sale of arms/equipment by other countries to Batista.¹⁶ Support from Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic was limited and too late for any significant effect. SAIP therefore is weighted as a -1 for the purpose of comparison with the other 6 dimensions of the "Sword Model."

Host Government Legitimacy

In actions against an insurgency, the issue of Host Government Legitimacy is often considered a pivotal factor in the survival or dissolution of a regime. For the Batista regime of 1952-1958, the issue of the government's legitimacy heavily influenced the Cuban public's reactions as well as the actions of the major intervening power, the United States. For this analysis, the dimension of Host Government Legitimacy includes the following aspects; degree of domestic support, host government perceived as corrupt, government ability to motivate the people and the degree to which political violence was considered common.

When Batista left power peacefully in 1944, following his loss in the presidential elections, he was a respected leader with a substantial, loyal political power base. His supporters included organized labor and the military. Internationally, the United States considered Batista a stable friend who could be counted upon to support U.S. foreign policy efforts.¹⁷ His legacy was one of political/economic stability and of relative political enlightenment as embodied in the Constitution of 1940 which he helped draft. His base of support was not limited to the two traditional pillars of political support, the Army and organized labor but included immigrants and many

campesinos.¹⁸ His election in absentia as Senator in 1948 was a testimony to the high regard in which he was still held by many.¹⁹ As described by Dr. Mario Lazo a prominent Cuban-American lawyer of the period:

In any case, on March 10 1952, a large portion of the population welcomed the return to power of Batista. It welcomed his announcement that, if the United States became involved in a war with the USSR, Cuba would fight on the side of the Americans. Business and industry were encouraged by his assurance that he would keep order and his hint that he would accede to its principal demand -a modification of Cuban regulations to permit an employer to dismiss a worker with severance pay, a change never consummated because of opposition from organized labor. Those most bitterly disappointed over the coup, of course, were the candidates running on the Ortodoxo ticket, including the young radical, Fidel Castro, who aspired to membership in the House of Representatives.²⁰

When Batista seized power on 10 March 1952, the Cuban public received him with mixed emotion.²¹

Disaffected citizens within Cuban society included not only politicians but also idealists, embodied by the various active student unions, as well as those portions of society which increasingly felt disenfranchised within the Cuban political system. The emerging middle class, while reaping the benefits of the diversifying Cuban economy began to expect and ultimately demand a greater part in the political process. Political stability that enhanced the business environment, representation within the government

and control of lawlessness were main concerns of this element of society. Eddie Chibas, and the Ortodoxo party which he led, epitomized many in this group. Many believe that if Chibas were alive in 1952, Batista would have never attempted the "golpe de Estado" of 10 March fearing absolute repudiation by this emerging nationalist group.

Batista attempted to gain the support of these elements of society by holding elections, first in November 1954 and again in November 1958. Many parties refused to participate because Batista blatantly influenced the outcome in both instances. Prior to the 1954 elections he enacted several electoral laws that provided incumbents with an advantage while encouraging the fragmentation of the opposition. These laws included restrictions on the free expression of opposition candidates and removed the existing minimum threshold of supporters that a candidate had to command before he was eligible for inclusion on the ballot. This act discouraged the formation of powerful coalition candidates in opposition to the Batista regime.²²

Despite the substantial electoral advantage that these laws provided, Batista ensured the outcome of both elections by engaging in massive electoral fraud. Batista won the election of 1954 and his hand picked successor, Andres Rivero Aguero won in 1958. Predictably his regime

did not gain any legitimacy as a result. Neither was the peoples desire for meaningful participation in their government assuaged by the electoral show.

Numerous sources have argued that the gangsterism and political corruption rampant in Cuba under Batista were the major cause of his defeat by a revolution promising clean government and a crime free society. The truth is that both gangsterism and political corruption had been quite prevalent in Cuban society for some time. One of the reasons why Batista successfully deposed Prio Socarras in 1952 without much initial opposition is that the public had become fed up with the endemic corruption and gangsterism of the Grau and Prio administrations.²³ As stated by Mr. Jose Salazar, a student leader of the period: "Resistance against Batista stemmed from his short circuiting of the political system and his corruption. While initially there was economic growth and social progress this was overshadowed by corruption."²⁴ While gangsterism and corruption were not the only reason for public opposition, they were certainly a contributing factor.

Once in power, Batista exerted a calming effect on the violence for a time. This was not necessarily due to his bringing the gangsters to justice. Batista, in many respects, represented a bigger, more powerful gang which

enforced some order. Payoffs to elected officials and the police continued to be an anticipated cost of doing business. The public at least had assurance that once the payoffs were made a product or service would be delivered.²⁵

Corruption was not limited to the civilian side of government. In order to secure the allegiance of the military, Batista removed many of the senior military leaders from power and either retired them or placed them in insignificant positions. These were replaced with his cronies, many of whom had participated with him in the Sergeant's Rebellion of 1933. The officers who were replaced, in many cases, represented the new, more professional armed forces that had emerged following Batista's first departure from power. Many of these officers had received formal military training abroad in the United States, Europe and Mexico. Within Cuba they had also benefited from the training provided by the U.S. military mission. Batista's replacement of these professionals with his cronies backfired in two important ways; he alienated a powerful professional force that he would later need to depend on, and he replaced professionals with cronies who would prove to have little military value. The ultimate effect of this one action was decidedly detrimental. The Cuban Army, which had steadily earned a reputation for

professionalism, was again politicized. For many Cubans the military became a defender of the regime instead of a defender of the Republic.²⁶

Batista combined his hold on the key institutions of government with the implementation of a farsighted economic and social agenda. Some would say that this was merely a further attempt to consolidate power. Others would argue that Batista, one of the original authors of the Constitution of 1940, was attempting to better the economic and social conditions of the country. Regardless of whether the motivation was self serving or altruistic, the social and economic improvements that occurred in the first portion of Batista's second regime were impressive. Economic diversification to reduce reliance on agriculture, industrialization and establishment of infrastructure throughout the island to support future industrialization were the principal thrusts of his policies.

Realizing the vulnerability of an economy heavily dependent upon agriculture, Batista made significant efforts to build the necessary infrastructure to support industrialization and attract industrial investment. His Long Range Economic and Social Development Plan allocated approximately 350 million dollars over a 4 year period to carry out a number of programs. Key among his major

infrastructure improvements were:

1. the construction of a reliable water system for Havana
2. 16,000 km of dirt roads and 1443 km of main (paved roads)
3. 34 public hospitals and dispensaries, and
4. One aeronautical technical school, 62 pre-vocational primary schools and over 1000 rural schools.²⁷

In the agricultural and industrial realm Batista's development plan provided needed improvements in storage and refrigeration facilities, fertilization and irrigation, promoted increased mechanization and intensified research in agricultural techniques. One of the ultimate goals was the diversification of the agricultural production of Cuba. This thrust was supported by a call for agrarian reform and economic assistance to cooperatives.²⁸ Working in tandem with agricultural advancements, Batista's support for industrial diversification included tax and credit incentives to private investors. The result was an economic boom manifested in the proliferation of new construction and the establishment of several major industrial employers.²⁹ As stated in the work by Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, Cuba: The

Making of a Revolution:

Cuba . . . ranked in 1958 as one of the most advanced countries in the Spanish speaking world . . . According to statistics of the Banco Nacional de Cuba for 1956, per capita income was 336 pesos (the peso was on par with the dollar) -the second highest in Latin America. Infrastructure included one of the three highly developed railway networks in Latin America, up to date highways and ports . . . only Mexico, Brazil and Chile outranked Cuba in value of industrial production. . . two thirds of the population could read and write. Cuba ranked third in number of physicians and first in the number of televisions stations and receiving sets.³⁰

In the social realm, Batista implemented labor provisions of the Constitution of 1940 and established programs for providing improved housing for the poor. The labor regulations included a guaranteed right to strike, forbade dismissal of employees without just cause, established an 8 hour work day, minimum wages, one month's paid annual vacation, 9 days sick leave and paid labor insurance among other benefits. His establishment of a Federal Housing Administration (FHA) resulted in the construction of 11,000 houses for the poor. The National Housing Commission that was formed repaired 40,000 farm houses and built 12,000 other houses.³¹

The economic and social improvements realized under Batista must be analyzed in context of the number and sector of society which most benefited. The improvements, impressive by any standard, most affected the urban areas.

While all sectors of society benefited, the middle and upper class gained the most. Those residing in the outlying areas gained least. Granted, much was accomplished but much still remained to be done.

The impact of the "zafra" (or sugar cane harvest) on the economy as a whole and on the lot of the campesinos in particular has received much attention. Some students of the revolution have identified the high seasonal unemployment as a main source of public dissatisfaction with Batista.³² This viewpoint fails to adequately account for the impact of emerging industries and the reluctance of the majority of the campesinos to support the revolution until late in the movement.³³ Overemphasis on the negative impact of the "zafra" as a source of dissatisfaction with the Batista regime is not borne out by facts.

Industrialization provided stable employment for some campesinos as well as the urban dweller. The majority of the jobs required literate but unskilled labor. Training was available through government sponsored schools for those jobs requiring semi-skilled labor. The agricultural sector of the economy required surge labor during the 3 month "zafra" but also employed a sizable number of workers full time to grow, process, package and ship the agricultural products. Most people involved in the "zafra" as surge

labor were also employed in other jobs during the remainder of the year. The surge labor also included city dwellers who temporarily left their jobs to participate in the "zafra."³⁴ The combined effects of crop diversification and industrialization were the reduction of any negative effects of the "zafra" during the Batista regime.

If the ultimate purpose of Batista's social agenda was to solidify the people behind his regime, it failed. The price of political castration and corruption proved too high for a public already frustrated by years of political malaise. Intellectuals and students were the first and most vocal of the opposition. Even the vast majority who chose not to actively participate, in fact contributed to the opposition by not supporting Batista.³⁵ As violence increased, repressive measures increased.

The police under Col. Ventura and the Servicio de Inteligencia Militar (SIM) played major roles in suppressing the opposition movement. These agencies were widely feared by the people, earning a reputation for indiscriminately and sadistically applying force.³⁶ Their task of repressing the opposition was complicated by corruption within the security services which often allowed detained people with connections to be set free.³⁷ Batista, in acknowledgment

and defense of these repressive measures claimed that they were necessary and even demanded by law-abiding citizens in order to control the political violence.³⁸

In summary Batista's regime did not enjoy legitimacy among the majority of the Cuban people. Although a portion of the people may have supported him or at least remained benevolently neutral in the beginning, many of these decided not to participate in his favor as the regime floundered. Batista's attempts to enhance his legitimacy through elections were largely perceived as a show. His public work projects, social reforms and efforts to diversify the economy, although of substantial importance, were perceived as primarily benefiting a small number of people. There was also the perception that much of the public funds appropriated for these projects actually were diverted to the pockets of cronies and politicians. The end result was that these projects were viewed as further attempts to enrich the ruling class versus improving the lot of the people. Finally the frequency and brutality of political violence which had plagued the country for years was not effectively contained. While a period of relative calm was established during the initial portion of the Batista regime, an ever-increasing cycle of political violence and repression flared up as a result of increasing

frustration with Batista's efforts to maintain power. The dimension of Host Government Legitimacy is considered a negative factor in Batista's counter-insurgency efforts because of these effects on the public and evaluated as a -1 with respect to the other dimensions.

Degree of Outside Support to Insurgents (DOSI).

The dimension of the Degree of Outside Support to Insurgents consists of the following principal elements: sanctuary available, insurgents isolated from sources of support, and the stage of war during which sanctuary was available to insurgents. This dimension is of particularly crucial importance during the formative stages of an insurgency. Safe havens and a steady source of external support can spell the difference between survival and defeat until a broad base of support is established within the target country. Because of this vulnerability most successful counter-insurgency strategies attack a nascent movement's outside support base to cause the movement's demise. The Batista regime failed to effectively eliminate outside support to the insurgency in the formative years. This enabled the movement to sustain substantial tactical defeats and ultimately garner support from the public within the country. The longer the opposition movement was able to

survive against Batista, the more status it gained in the eyes of the public at the regime's expense.

Sanctuary for the opposition movement was available throughout the period 1952-1958 from the United States, Mexico, the USSR, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica. Interestingly enough these are many of the same countries identified as "intervening powers" in previously analyzed dimensions. While their importance as sanctuaries and the respective government's approval of the use of their territories as sanctuaries fluctuated during the period, they were all important to the survival of the opposition movement.³⁹

The Batista opposition used third countries to plan and develop political/financial support for the movement. Of key importance to this dimension of outside support was the existence of a loose umbrella organization known as the Committee in Exile. Castro, writing to opposition leaders in exile, from the Sierra Maestra on 9 January 1958:

Once again, the role of the Cuban exiles and émigrés in this struggle is to be understood this way: financial contributions, public denunciation of the crimes our country is suffering and a campaign to promote the Cuban cause directed toward American democratic opinion.

But if the exiles and émigrés really want to help us, they must immediately put an end to all the rivalries and feuding that have been frustrating the aid so badly needed by our fighters.

Some months ago, in order to make really effective the cooperation of those Cubans living abroad, the Direccion Nacional created the Committee in exile. This committee, based in New York, has been given full authority to organize and direct all these endeavors, as well as to name its own delegates in all the groups or centers of Cuban population. All activities and financial contributions of the movement outside Cuba are to be carried out solely through these delegates. Cuban exiles and émigrés are hereby informed that the chairman of the Committee in exile is Dr. Mario Llerena. The secretary in charge of finances is Dr. Raul Chibas.⁴⁰

This letter not only identifies the major activities that the Batista opposition was to accomplish internationally on behalf of the movement in Cuba but also illustrates one of many attempts by Castro to unite the opposition movement, under, his leadership.

The United States provided the most important sanctuary to the opposition movement. The physical proximity, existence of a large expatriate Cuban population, traditionally close economic, political and social ties between Cuba and the U.S. and the traditional benevolence of the U.S. public to democratic opposition movements were key factors in the use of the U.S. as a sanctuary.

In Batista's estimation, support from the U.S. to the opposition movement in the form of a logistical and political safe haven was crucial to the movement's survival. In his testimony before the U.S. Senate Sub-Committee Hearing of 30 August 1960, Ambassador E.T. Smith said:

Batista told me that when Prio left Cuba, Prio and Minister Aleman took \$140 million out of Cuba. If we cut that estimate in half, they may have shared \$70 million. It is believed that Prio spent a great many millions of dollars in the United States assisting the revolutionaries. This was done right from our shores.

Senator Eastland: No effort was made to stop it?

Mr. Smith: The Batista government complained continually about airlifts and air drops of bodies and arms from the United States. I always kept the State Department fully informed.

But we seemed to have great trouble in enforcing our neutrality laws. I have sometimes wished that we had been half as diligent at that time in enforcing our neutrality laws as we have been lately.⁴¹

The availability of sanctuary in the U.S. for the Cuban opposition movement was acknowledged by both sides as key to the movements survival and flourishing.

Castro was initially reluctant to accept outside support. This attitude changed in 1956 following his imprisonment in Mexico, for organizing an attempt to invade Cuba. He approached former President Prio, who was living in exile in Miami, for financial support. President Prio agreed to support the Castro movement with \$100,000. Simultaneously Prio was supporting an invasion plot in conjunction with Trujillo of the Dominican Republic.⁴² With this money, Castro was able to sustain his fledgling "Army," purchase a decrepit yacht called Granma and launch his famous "invasion" of Cuba, landing on 2 December 1956 in the

province of Oriente.⁴³

Support from Mexico to the insurgent movement was important financially and militarily. It was in Mexico that Castro trained, equipped and launched his initial invasion force.⁴⁴ Yet it was also while in Mexico that Castro and his initial group of followers suffered imprisonment and the capture of many of their weapons by the Mexican government. Ultimately financial and political support for the insurgency was Mexico's greatest contribution to the movement. Members of the opposition received asylum in the Mexican embassy in Cuba and the Direccion Nacional conducted coordination, printed propaganda and elicited financial support in Mexico.⁴⁵

The role of the Dominican Republic in support of the crisis in Cuba is difficult to explain. During Batista's second regime, Trujillo of the Dominican Republic occasionally supported the Batista opposition while at other times he supported Batista. Because of the long-standing feud between Batista and Trujillo, the Dominican Republic was viewed by Batista as a possible base of operations for opposition groups seeking to overthrow his regime.⁴⁶ In late 1956, Cuban newspapers published reports that Prio and Trujillo were plotting an invasion of the island (Cuba) from

the Dominican republic.⁴⁷ Yet by 1958, when Batista was no longer receiving support from the United States, he received material from Trujillo.⁴⁸ At best the Dominican Republic could be considered an unreliable ally to both the opposition and Batista.

The level of support received from the Soviet Union by the opposition movement was discreet.⁴⁹ By most accounts this was limited to some training and moral support provided to key members of the movement and some monetary aid via the PSP leaders in Cuba.⁵⁰ Until 1958 the opposition movement publicly denied receiving aid from the Communists. On April 1958, Committee in Exile spokesmen in the U.S. issued the following statement in response to the communist pronouncement that they were willing to join in the opposition movement against Batista:

Urrutia emphatically denied any kind of contact or understanding with the communists and reaffirmed the democratic principles of the Cuban revolution. His statements appeared in practically all newspapers. The New York Mirror 4 April 1958 also quoted Dr. Mario Llerena as saying: We flatly reject any cooperation whatsoever (with the communists). The Cuban Reds simply want to get on the bandwagon at this time. We would never have accepted this offer from the Reds at any time because our revolution is an absolutely democratic revolution.⁵¹

By this time though, there were already key elements within

the opposition movement that were ideologically communist.⁵²

As stated by Dr. Mario Llerena concerning Castro's response to this public statement of 3 April:

The anti-Communist views of the official presidential candidate of the Castro movement and its appointed representatives outside of Cuba were understandably widely disseminated; so widely, in fact that they caused quite a stir in the Sierra Maestra. It appears that there were indeed secret contacts taking place at the time between the 26 of July and the Communist Party in Cuba. It is now known that the Communists had been in touch with the 26 of July movement all along through Raul Castro, although exactly when the actual negotiations started at committee levels has not been established. . . particularly Castro and the Che Guevara, got "real mad" when they learned of our anti-Communist declarations.⁵³

Aside from this limited training and support, there is no evidence that the Soviet Union intervened in the Cuban insurgency.

The final country to provide significant support to the opposition movement was Costa Rica under the Presidency of Jose Figueres. Using a network run by Huber Matos, a former Cuban schoolteacher, supplies were procured in Costa Rica and sent by aircraft to rebels in Cuba. This action was known of and approved by President Figueres.⁵⁴

The Batista opposition also benefited from the presence in their ranks of foreign nationals espousing leftist ideology. The exploits of the Argentinean

revolutionary, Ernesto "Che" Guevara, are well known. There also exist numerous examples of participation by idealists and adventurers of the type that might have filled the ranks of the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War of the 1930's. A former American soldier named William Morgan attained the rank of Major in Castro's rebel army during the revolution. He achieved renown through his training of rebel recruits, and most notably his receipt of the surrender of the Naval Station at Cienfuegos and command, for a time, of the city of Cienfuegos during the rebel advance on Havana in December 1958.⁵⁵ Although certainly idealistic and possibly leftist in thinking, there is little evidence that these isolated instances of participation in the revolution by foreign nationals were coordinated by any foreign powers.

Batista was generally unsuccessful in isolating the opposition movement from outside support. Movements organizing and directing financial support to groups within Cuba flourished in several countries. The countries involved either tacitly or openly supported these de-stabilizing actions over the objections of Batista. In the end it was Batista and not the opposition who was isolated from international support. This dimension is therefore considered to have had a negative effect against

the counter-insurgency efforts of Batista and is assigned a -1 value.

Analysis of Short Term Dimensions
Actions versus Subversion (AVS)

The dimension of Actions versus Subversion consists of the following three elements: psychological operations, intelligence operations and population controls. All of these elements are focused primarily against the insurgents and their target audience.

During an insurgency, the elements of psychological operations and intelligence operations are of primary importance in the regime's efforts to gain and maintain popular support. Government psychological operations has as its primary goal the publicizing of positive aspects of the regime and negative aspects of the opposition. Control of the media, civic action programs, fair treatment or maltreatment of prisoners, administration of even handed justice are principal tools of this element. On the other hand, intelligence operations focus on identifying opposition leaders, members, supporters, tactics and plans so that the regime can take what it considers appropriate actions. Intelligence operations typically support psychological operations by identifying exploitable themes

but their target audiences are different. While psychological operations attempt to gain and maintain support for the regime, throughout the population, intelligence operations focus against those who have not been "converted" by the psychological operations.

Psychological operations by the Batista regime took three primary forms; well publicized public works and social programs to gain and maintain broad support, the use of terror to influence the populace not to participate in the opposition, and tactical psychological operations (psyops) to induce insurgents to surrender. In each of these psyops efforts, the regime achieved only short term, limited success. In the long term, Batista's psychological operations seriously misread the target population.

The public works and social programs instituted by Batista were widely perceived as attempts to buy public support and enrich members of the regime. Meanwhile, there were few attempts by the military to conduct Civic Action Programs to enhance civil-military government-people relations.⁵⁶ The majority of the populace was not swayed into supporting Batista by these actions. In the end they chose to remain aloof of the struggle between the Batista regime and the insurgents, viewing it more like a struggle between two gangsters than a battle for survival of the

republic.⁵⁷

The regime's use of terror to keep the populace from supporting the opposition and to collect intelligence was commonplace. Various governmental and para-military organizations took part in these extra-legal actions often accomplished in Batista's name but rarely bearing the evidence of central coordination. The Servicio de Inteligencia Militar (SIM) and the Buro Represivo de Actividades Comunistas (BRAC) were among the most feared of these organizations. It was common knowledge that a citizen detained for questioning by any one of these organizations could expect a difficult time.

The tactics of these organizations were extreme and included leaving tortured, dead bodies on street corners.⁵⁸ The intelligence operations conducted were by all accounts very successful in identifying and neutralizing opponents of the regime. Unfortunately in many cases law abiding political opponents and innocent citizens were dealt with brutally in the regimes' attempts to neutralize the opposition.⁵⁹ A graphic example of this occurred in the wake of the landing of the Granma in the province of Oriente, "the government arrested hundreds of suspects and bodies began to appear mysteriously about the country. For

the most part they were known revolutionaries with a history of anti-government activities. Many had been tortured and shot in the back of the head."⁶⁰ This unmerciful reaction by the regime was repeated again in Havana following the attack on the Presidential Palace by the Directorio Revolucionario on 13 March 1957. The SIM detained many opposition leaders to include Dr. Pelayo Cuervo Navarro, a proponent of clean government and attempted to arrest Dr. Carlos Marquez Sterling, a leading presidential candidate. Dr. Navarro's body was discovered the following day shot in the head.⁶¹ This may be yet another instance of lack of control exercised by Batista over his security apparatus since the death of Pelayo Cuervo was a serious blow to his legitimacy. These harsh government reactions increased as the opposition terrorist actions escalated. The majority of the public were caught in the middle, choosing not to align with either side for fear of reprisal.

To complicate matters even more, some political factions outside the government used the political chaos to eliminate rivals. Communist sources often provided Batista counter-intelligence agents with intelligence to locate and neutralize their rivals in the Directorio Revolucionario.⁶²

While Batista's intelligence operations were tactically efficient they ultimately failed. The extreme and often arbitrary methods employed destroyed the sense of justice and moral integrity that the people felt they were entitled to receive from their government. Instead of eliminating the opposition, their methods aided the opposition by turning the people away from the Batista regime.

There is little evidence that tactical psyops were used by the Cuban Army to induce insurgents to surrender. Other than their use against the insurgents of the Granma expedition of 1956 references to tactical psyops are lacking. This indicates that such operations were rare and of slight impact.

The element of population control is normally applied only after the opposition has begun to develop into an insurgency. It is costly to implement and restricts the economy. The aim of population control is to separate the insurgent from his support base. Restrictions on the movement of the public, no notice searches, cordons on insurgent dominated areas are all typical components of this element. Batista appeared hesitant to use such techniques.

As the opposition movement gained strength the Batista regime should have logically implemented a system of

population control to separate the insurgents from their supporters. Perhaps a fear of overly disrupting the economy or sending a negative message to the public was the reason for this failure. The value of such a technique was realized by some Cuban officers and formally recommended in November 1957 by Major Castro Rojas.⁶³ This recommendation was rejected in favor of the plan that resulted in the disastrous army offensive of 1958. Aside from limited use during the final government offensive of 1958, the government never implemented such a technique.

The regime's actions against subversion enjoyed partial success on a tactical level while failing strategically to gain/maintain support for the government. The brutal and arbitrary application of force forced the populace into the sidelines of the struggle while the limited psychological operations failed to convince the people that the Batista regime offered the best alternative. Therefore this element contributed negatively to counter-insurgency efforts and is assigned a value of -1.

Host Government Military Actions (HGMA)

The dimension of Host Government Military Actions (HGMA) is divided into the following four elements: discipline of regular troops, discipline of paramilitary

troops, willingness to take officer casualties and aggressive patrolling. In the case of each of these elements the state of the Cuban military at the beginning of Batista's second regime was remarkably different and superior to the state of the Cuban armed forces at the end of 1958. The reduced effectiveness of the Cuban armed forces by autumn 1958 eliminated the last roadblock to the Batista opposition. The Cuban armed forces, which eventually numbered over 40,000 men, were ultimately defeated by a insurgent force that numbered no more than several hundred for the majority of the period in question.⁶⁴

With the exception of isolated actions, most notably the attack on the Moncada barracks of 26 July 1952, the armed insurrection did not begin in earnest until 2 December 1956 when Castro landed in Oriente. The manner in which the armed forces dealt with the Granma landing, when compared with military actions during the summer of 1958, gives great insight into the decline of the armed forces. The discipline, training and aggressiveness characterized by joint, coordinated operations between army, navy, air force and rural guard⁶⁵ present in the armed forces during early 1957, were often missing by the time Batista faced his most serious military threat in late 1958. As stated by Batista

himself "at the beginning of autumn, 1958, through negligence, through complicity, for financial gain or through fear or cowardice, army units frequently surrendered to the rebel groups . . . "66 The politicization, corruption and rapid expansion of the Cuban armed forces were all key to this decline in effectiveness.

When Batista took power he quickly replaced many senior professional officers with political cronies from his first regime. His motives were to insure the support of the armed forces for his regime and reward his supporters.⁶⁷ His actions also sent a much more important message to the public and the armed forces. For the public, the armed forces were no longer protectors of the country as much as security for the regime. For the armed forces, the message was that competence was no longer as important as connections. The first message weakened the link between the people and their armed forces. The second message weakened the link between the armed forces and their leaders. Both messages contributed much to decreasing the discipline of the armed forces. This manifested itself not only in their increasingly harsh treatment of non-combatants and prisoners but also in their battlefield tenacity. "Very few army officers tried to establish good relationships with the rural population. Most dealt with them harshly, a

behavior the foot -soldiers, former peasants themselves soon imitated." ⁶⁸

It was inevitable that Batista's politicization of the armed forces would cause a reaction from idealists within the institution who envisioned the role of the armed forces as protecting the republic and its citizens rather than a specific regime. This reaction was manifested in two notable instances; the so called "Conspiracy of the Pure" in April 1956 and the rebellion of the Cayo Loco Naval base of September 1957. In both cases the rebellions were crushed and Batista became more intransigent to public calls for representative government.⁶⁹ However, the message that these coup attempts sent to all was unmistakable; the Armed Forces did not fully back the Batista regime.

The "Conspiracy of the Pure" was led by army Colonel Ramon Barquin and involved 200-250 officers and men. The plan was to take control of key military installations, principally in the capital, and force Batista to step down in favor of an interim military government. Unfortunately the conspiracy was discovered before the plan could be implemented and the conspirators were imprisoned.⁷⁰

The rebellion of the Cayo Loco Naval base was more broad based than the "Conspiracy of the Pure". Included in

the conspiracy were members of each of the armed forces, the police, the Autentico Party and the Movimiento 26 de Julio. The plan included coordinated attacks against military installations in Havana and Cayo Loco. Because the attacks in Havana failed to occur, Batista was able to bring overwhelming combat power against the conspirators in Cayo Loco, crushing the initial success achieved.⁷¹

Complementing the issue of the discipline within the armed forces are the elements of willingness to accept officer casualties and aggressive patrolling. While there were many instances of junior officers leading their men in the field against the insurgents,⁷² those of higher rank were rarely seen participating in field operations. As stated by Col. Ramon Barquin:

The generals and colonels only visited briefly the rear area of the zone of operations, returning the same day to their headquarters in the capital thereby leaving the troops and officers with a feeling of abandonment and defeat; by contrast the leaders, officers within the guerrilla movement, were generally dedicated, imaginative and aggressive.⁷³

This notable absence of senior leaders in the field sharing the hardships of their men and reinforcing discipline and sense of purpose contributed greatly to the loss of spirit and discipline in the armed forces. When combined with the ever increasing incidents of officers

selling weapons to the insurgents and openly collaborating with them, the junior officers and troops in the field lost their fighting spirit.⁷⁴ By mid-1958 the government forces were rarely patrolling aggressively against the insurgents with the exception of the disastrous government offensive of the summer 1958.

Batista used paramilitary organizations to augment security forces in the struggle against the opposition. The most infamous of these organizations were the "Tigers" that were led by MSR founder Cuban Senator and Castro arch-enemy, Rolando Masferrer. Under tenuous control of Batista, this unit prosecuted its own campaign against anyone thought to be a threat to Batista.⁷⁵ Its methods were extreme and the effect on the populace was to increase the general sense of fear and lawlessness. By allowing such organizations to exist and relying on them to stabilize his regime, Batista further eroded any sense of legitimacy that he might have had.⁷⁶

While the Cuban armed forces were numerically large, well trained and equipped, their military actions in support of the Batista regime were a failure. The politicization of the armed forces, carried out by Batista soon after his coup, seriously degraded their effectiveness.

Many began to question their role in supporting an increasingly repressive regime, officers often did not inspire their men with their willingness to share sacrifices and risks with them. Instances of profiteering and collaboration with the insurgents further demoralized the armed forces. As the military situation became desperate, the armed forces were no longer able to crush the insurgents in spite of their superiority in numbers and equipment. The element of Host Government Military Actions is therefore considered a detractor to the counter-insurgency efforts of Batista and is assigned a -1 value.

Unity of Efforts (UOE)

The dimension of Unity of Effort consists of the elements of perceptions of intervening power interests, clarity of terms for settlement, intervening power use of public diplomacy and intervening power-host government polarity and similarity of objectives. With the exception of the dimension of Host Government Legitimacy, the dimension of Unity of Effort was arguably the most critical to the survival of the Batista regime. Because of this, the above list of variables was expanded to include the internal variables of: command and control structure orchestrated, political-military effort coordinated at what level, were

psychological operations coordinated, were psychological operations initiated early, battlefield polarity and political-military polarity." Finally, for the purpose of analyzing unity of effort, only the United States is considered as an intervening power due to its central role in the crisis.

An examination of the second Batista regime reveals an obvious lack of unity of effort both in the regime's internal politics as well as its external politics. There is little evidence that he even fully understood the concept of an over-arching national strategy to coordinate the many elements of government in the achievement of national goals. His exercise of power was haphazard and driven by his desire to retain power. His responsibility, as the Head of State, to guide the Republic in its achievement of national goals assumed secondary importance. This lack of clearly defined national goals and a national strategy to coordinate the efforts of the various agencies of the government ultimately proved fatal to this regime.

Batista maintained power through manipulation, graft and force. He had to bribe labor with promises of reform, military leaders with rank and position, big business and the poor with public works projects and social programs. Yet, by bribing special interests groups he was

open to charges of corruption. By replacing capable military leaders with cronies he destroyed the force that he would later rely on to suppress the insurgency. He attempted to accomplish this while maintaining a semblance of legitimacy. This combination of circumstances ensured that he would never be able to craft a coherent political, economic, and military strategy. This lack of strategy was a critical weakness that was exploited effectively by the opposition.

The only evidence of a coherent counter-insurgent strategy was developed in early 1957 by Colonel Pedro Barrera Perez, the Chief of Operations for the Armed Forces. The strategy contained a military plan and social plan as depicted below:

a. Military Plan

- (1) Unify command within the tactical zones under one senior officer
- (2) Send a reinforced infantry battalion to operate against the rebels
- (3) Tactical maneuver; Comb the Sierra from Las Mercedes to the north with three infantry companies in attack line for the purpose of forcing the rebels towards the southern coast where they will be exterminated by ground and air assaults along the coastal highway Pilon-Uvero

b. Social Plan

(1) Implement a social welfare program for the campesinos in order to win them to the governments cause.

(2) Implement a psychological operation plan to regain the support of the population in the zone.

The plan ultimately failed because it never gained the full support of Batista and was never implemented fully.

However, it represented the only coherent plan for dealing with the insurgents and might well have proven successful if it had received full backing.⁷⁸

The United States as the major intervening power also suffered from lack of a coherent strategy. The most obvious manifestations of this were the incompatible signals that Washington sent the Batista regime concerning its position vis a vis Batista's illegal seizure of power. The U.S. was one of the first countries that recognized the Batista regime. The U.S. continued its official support for the regime through implementation of the provisions of the MDAP and economic concessions.⁷⁹ Simultaneously the U.S. turned a blind eye to the important opposition support activities occurring in the U.S. Fund raising, shipment of arms/personnel and organization of opposition all occurred on U.S. soil. It was only after Batista protested vigorously to the U.S. Ambassador that limited action was

taken to stem the flow of material support from the U.S.

According to Ambassador Smith:

Bodies, ammunition and arms were being shipped in a steady stream from Florida and were being delivered to the revolutionaries in the hills of the Sierra Maestra. . . .the Justice Department obtained an indictment by the Federal Grand Jury in February 1958 against Dr. Prio Socarras, former President of Cuba, who had been the main source of shipment of contraband arms from Florida to the revolutionists. Agents of Prio were the biggest offenders and for some time they openly defied United States neutrality laws by shipping material from Florida to the revolutionary forces in the Sierra Maestra and the Sierra Escambray. In addition to Dr. Prio and his agents there were many active groups operating in the United States to bring about the downfall of the Batista government.⁸⁰

The U.S. government was caught between a desire to support a traditional friend of the U.S. and trying to further its democratic ideals in the hemisphere. While the U.S. did not particularly care for Batista and the authoritarianism that he represented, viable alternatives were ignored. The U.S. did not lend its support to the numerous reconciliation plans that were put forth right up to the time of Castro's seizure of power. Dr. Mario Lazo said:

. . .At least six plans were submitted to Washington aiming at political solutions that were alternatives to both Batista and Castro. . . . The Catholic church developed a plan providing for a provisional government of unity. Despite the impressive sponsorship, the State Department refused even such token cooperation.⁸¹

It was only after Batista had fled Cuba that the State Department made clear its desires when as recalled by Ambassador Smith:

On January 4, I received a message from William Weiland Chief of Caribbean Division, asking that I come to Washington immediately to discuss the recognition of Castro by the United States Government because the State Department wanted to recognize the Fidel Castro government as soon as possible.⁸²

Neither the moderate opposition nor Batista nor even the U.S. Ambassador had a clean idea of what conditions were necessary before the U.S. would officially support a solution in Cuba. Unity of effort between the Batista regime and the U.S. never truly existed. The motives and goals of each were too divergent and neither party clearly and unequivocally stated their goals to the other party. Fidel Casto ultimately was the winner and the Cuban people the losers as one dictator replaced another dictator. The dimension of Unity of Effort is therefore evaluated as a detractor to the counter-insurgency effort and is assigned a value of (-1).

While the Batista regime may have succeeded in applying individual elements to good effect in its counter-insurgency, all of the dimensions of the "Sword Model" were evaluated unfavorable to the regime. Figure 5 summarizes the values assigned to the dimensions and their

variables. Ultimately one wonders how Batista was able to retain power so long.

<u>Military Actions Of Intervening Power</u>			
Number of troops	+		
Types of action	+		
Primary operational objectives	-		
Unconventional operations	-	Overall:	-
<u>Support Actions Of Intervening Power</u>			
Military support consistent	-		
Perceived strength of commitment	-		
Perceived length of commitment	-	Overall:	-
<u>Host Government Legitimacy</u>			
Degree of domestic support	-		
Host government perceived as corrupt	-		
Government ability to motivate people	-		
Political violence considered common	-	Overall:	-
<u>Degree Of Outside Support To Insurgents</u>			
Sanctuary available	-		
Insurgents isolated from sources of support	-		
Stage of war during which sanctuary is available to insurgents	-	Overall:	-
<u>Actions Vs Subversion</u>			
Pop Controls	-		
Psyops	-		
Intel Operations	+	Overall:	-
<u>Host Government Military Actions</u>			
Discipline/Tng Regular Troops	-		
Discipline/Tng Para-Military	-		
Willingness to take Officer casualties	-		
Aggressive patrolling	+	Overall:	-
<u>Unity of Effort</u>			
Perception of IP interests	-		
Clarity of terms for settlement	-		
IP use of public diplomacy	-		
IP-HG Political polarity	-	Overall:	-

Fig. 5. Summarized Values of "Sword Model" Dimensions.
Source: Max G. Manwaring and John T. Fishel.
"Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency Toward a
New Analytical Approach." Small Wars and
Insurgency. Vol. 3, (Winter 1992), pg. 284

Endnotes

¹ Max G. Manwaring & John T. Fishel. "Insurgency & Counter-Insurgency: Toward a New Analytical Approach." Small Wars and Insurgencies, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Winter 1992), pg. 272-310

² Robert Quirk, Fidel Castro (New York, London: WW Norton & Co., 1993), pg. 23-24, 113

³ Ramon Barquin, Las Luchas Guerrilleras in Cuba (Madrid, San Juan P.R.: Editorial Playon, 1975), pg. 526-527.

⁴ E.T. Smith, Fourth Floor (New York, Random House, 1962), pg. 97.

⁵ Ibid., pg. 99.

⁶ Robert Quirk, Fidel Castro, pg. 170.

⁷ E.T. Smith, Fourth Floor, pg. 99.

⁸ Fulgencio Batista, Cuba Betrayed (New York, Washington, Hollywood, Vintage Press, 1962), pg. 71.

⁹ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart (New York, NY, Twin Circle Publishing Co., 1968), pg. 160.

¹⁰ Robert Quirk, Fidel Castro, pg. 170.

¹¹ E.T. Smith, Fourth Floor, pg. 100.

¹² Ibid., pg. 138.

¹³ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 91-93.

¹⁴ E.T. Smith, The Fourth Floor, pg. 88.

¹⁵ Rafael Fermoselle, The Evolution of the Cuban Military 1492-1968 (Miami, Ediciones Universal, 1987), pg. 213.

¹⁶ E.T. Smith, Fourth Floor, pg. 100.

¹⁷ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 73-79.

¹⁸ Ramon Bonachea & Marta San Martin, The Cuban Insurrection 1952-1959 (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1974), pg. 8-9.

¹⁹ Carlos Marques Sterling, Historia de la Isla de Cuba (New York, NY: Regents Publishing Co. Inc., 1975), pg. 240

²⁰ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 91-92.

²¹ Ramon L. Bonachea, The Cuban Insurrection, pg. 8-9

²² Ramon L. Bonachea, The Cuban Insurrection, pg. 30-36.

²³ Carlos Marquez Sterling, Historia de Cuba, pg. 238-243.

²⁴ Jose Salazar, Interview of 30 December 1993.

²⁵ Ernesto Blanco, Interview of 29 December 1993.

²⁶ Aldo Lopez, Interview of 30 December 1993.

²⁷ Fulgencio Batista, Cuba Betrayed, pg. 170-180.

²⁸ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 100-101.

²⁹ Ibid., pg. 100-103.

³⁰ Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, Cuba: The Making of a Revolution (New York, London: WW Norton & Co., 1968) pg. 9-10.

³¹ Fulgencio Batista, Cuba Betrayed, pg. 178-180.

³² Maurice Zeitlin, Revolutionary Politics and the Cuban Working Class (New York, Evanston & London: Harper Torch Books, 1970), pg. 46.

³³ Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, Cuba: The Making of a Revolution, pg. 14-15.

³⁴ Ernesto Blanco, Interview of 30 December 1993.

³⁵ Aldo Lopez, Interview of 30 December 1993.

- ³⁶ Jose Salazar, Interview of 30 December 1993.
- ³⁷ Aldo Lopez, Interview of 30 December 1993.
- ³⁸ Fulgencio Batista, Cuba Betrayed, pg. 41
- ³⁹ Mario Llerena, The Unsuspected Revolution (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978), pg. 132-140.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., pg. 146.
- ⁴¹ E.T. Smith, The Fourth Floor, pg. 48.
- ⁴² Robert Quirk, Fidel Castro, pg. 113-114.
- ⁴³ Rafael Fermoselle, Evolution of the Cuban Military, pg. 218.
- ⁴⁴ Ernesto Guevara, Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War (New York, NY: Monthly Review Press Inc., 1968), pg. 36-41.
- ⁴⁵ Mario Llerena, The Unsuspected Revolution, pg. 115-124.
- ⁴⁶ Rafael Fermoselle, Evolution of the Cuban Military, pg. 213.
- ⁴⁷ Robert Quirk, Fidel Castro, pg. 113-114.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., pg. 170.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., pg., 44-45.
- ⁵⁰ E.T. Smith, The Fourth Floor, pg. 146.
- ⁵¹ Mario Llerena, The Unsuspected Revolution, pg. 228.
- ⁵² Ibid.
- ⁵³ Ibid.
- ⁵⁴ Ramon Barquin, Las Luchas Guerrilleras en Cuba, pg. 523-524.

⁵⁵ Leo Huberman, Cuba: Anatomy of a Revolution (New York, NY: Monthly Review Press, 1961), pg. 69-70.

⁵⁶ Aris Arias, Interview of 30 December 1993.

⁵⁷ Ernesto E. Blanco, Interview of 30 December 1993.

⁵⁸ Rafael Fermoselle, Evolution of the Cuban Military, pg. 226.

⁵⁹ Jose Salazar, Interview of 30 December 1993.

⁶⁰ Rafael Fermoselle, Evolution of the Cuban Military, pg. 220.

⁶¹ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 137.

⁶² Ramon Bonachea, The Cuban Insurrection, pg. 129-130.

⁶³ Ibid., pg. 98.

⁶⁴ Ramon Barquin, Las Luchas Guerrilleras en Cuba, pg. 556.

⁶⁵ Ramon Bonachea, The Cuban Insurrection, pg. 86.

⁶⁶ Fulgencio Batista, Cuba Betrayed, pg. 42-43.

⁶⁷ Rafael Fermoselle, The Evolution of the Cuban Military, pg. 230.

⁶⁸ Ramon Bonachea, The Cuban Insurrection, pg. 91.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pg. 63-64.

⁷⁰ Rafael Fermoselle, The Evolution of the Cuban Military, pg. 227.

⁷¹ Ramon Barquin, Las Luchas Guerrilleras en Cuba, pg. 468-477.

⁷² Aris Arias, Interview of 30 December 1993.

⁷³ Ramon Barquin, Las Luchas Guerrilleras en Cuba, pg. 55.

⁷⁴ Aris Arias, Interview of 30 December 1993.

⁷⁵ Rafael Fermoselle, The Evolution of the Cuban Military, pg. 227.

⁷⁶ Ernesto E. Blanco, Interview of 30 December 1993.

⁷⁷ Max G. Manwaring & John T. Fishel, "Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency: Toward a New Analytical Approach", pg. 301-304. This discussion of unity of effort addresses the following variables within the "Sword Model": Number 11, 14, 25, 61, 62.

⁷⁸ Ramon Barquin, Las Luchas Guerrilleras en Cuba, pg. 389-390.

⁷⁹ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 92, 102.

⁸⁰ E.T. Smith, The Fourth Floor, pg. 65.

⁸¹ Mario Lazo, Dagger in the Heart, pg. 165.

⁸² E.T. Smith, The Fourth Floor, pg. 193.

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSIONS AND APPLICATIONS

The "Sword Model" highlights the numerous reasons for the failure of Batista's counter-insurgency efforts. The regime was weak in all dimensions of the "Sword Model" but the lack of government legitimacy and the virtual non-existence of unity of effort within the government proved most critical. The remaining five dimensions of the "Sword Model" were found significant in that they accelerated the deterioration of the Batista's grip on power. In isolation from the dimensions of legitimacy and unity of effort they were not of primary significance. Batista lacked legitimacy. He was unable to formulate a unified response because his regime lacked an over-arching political, social, economic and military strategy to coordinate the efforts of the governmental agencies.

Cuba in the early 1950's was ripe for the emergence of a "caudillo." The society lacked a strong democratic tradition and had grown accustomed to political violence. Cuba's political history since independence was marred repeatedly by the rule of caudillos, incompetence,

unfulfilled promises, political violence and corruption. Yet, Cuba was slowly developing a capacity for peaceful, scheduled transfer of power. Prior to Batista's "golpe de Estado" in 1952, the Cuban presidency had changed peacefully four consecutive times.¹ However, lack of democratic traditions, epitomized by official corruption, and spiraling political violence led to disillusionment with the democratic process and provided fertile ground for Batista's usurpation of power. Strong public resentment to Batista's illegal actions and his suppression of political opponents undermined any sense of legitimacy that the regime might initially have enjoyed.

When Batista seized power on 10 March 1952, he failed to realize that the political, social, economic and international climate had changed substantially from that of the 1930's. Cuba's growing middle class aspired to a greater voice in their government commensurate with their increasing economic power.² The public in general was becoming more intolerant of corruption in government and endemic gangsterism.³ Internationally, while there were many exceptions, political systems were dividing generally along two camps. Representative governments aligned often with the west and authoritarian generally aligned with the east. While the promise of stability, favorable environment

for investment and friendship carried weight, in the eyes of the U.S. they would not automatically offset the negative implications of a dictatorial, repressive regime. Each of these factors were ignored by Batista as he chose to bypass the electoral process and seize power in March 1952. His failure to correctly assess the political climate and effectively address the key elements of public dissatisfaction doomed his regime.

The faulty assessment of the political, social, and economic climate led Batista to apply outdated political tactics to a radically different situation. Batista attempted to consolidate his power through nepotism, corruption, political chicanery and lies. He installed political cronies in key government/military positions, bought political interests groups with public works projects and social legislation, created a legislative board to supplant the legally elected legislature and lied about the prospect of quick and free elections.⁴ These means of consolidating political power were often at odds with each other and with the ultimate aim of engendering public acceptance of the regime. In the framework of the "Sword Model," Batista failed in each of the variables that comprise Host Government Legitimacy.

The legitimacy of the Batista regime was also affected by international actions. Initially, the international community was quick to bolster the legitimacy of the regime by recognizing it as the legal government. Within two weeks of Batista's seizure of power, the United States recognized his government.⁵ This action was further reinforced by the continuance of existing military and economic agreements that aided Batista in consolidating power.

Over time the relationship between the U.S. government and Batista changed. The U.S. moved from supporting Batista, to a policy of withholding support and finally to a position of openly supporting his opposition. The effect of this change in policy was as devastating psychologically and materially to Batista as it was encouraging to the opposition movement.⁶

International support ultimately proved a key element in redefining the legitimacy of the Batista regime. Sympathetic international press and an extensive political and logistics infrastructure was available to the opposition in neighboring countries. These influenced the eventual withdrawal of U.S. support. Without these elements Batista would not have faced a credible threat. Here again Batista failed in each of the variables of the dimension of Unity of

Effort in the "Sword Model."

The Batista government was further hampered by the lack of an overarching strategy. The concept of a coordinated politico-military strategy to deal with the sources of public unrest did not even surface until 1957.⁷ While this strategy was well conceived, it failed because it was late on the scene and only partially implemented. Had Batista been more politically astute earlier in his regime he might have delayed or avoided defeat by implementing a coherent strategy.

The one governmental institution that had the prestige and capacity to act as a moderating force was the military. However, flawed decisions concerning its role in the counter-insurgency coupled with serious underlying weakness rendered it unequal to the task. Born from the Army of Liberation, the traditions of the Cuban Armed Forces emphasized the role of protector of the people and guardian of the constitution. Unfortunately, the politicalization of the armed forces in the 1930's and the appointment of officers based on political loyalty weakened the link between the people and their army. The participation of elements of the armed forces in Batista's seizure of power in 1952 and the use of the armed forces to suppress public dissent contributed to further deteriorating the trust of

the public in its armed forces. In the end the military failed in its traditional roles because the public came to view it as a guardian of the regime instead of as a protector of the people and the constitution. Legitimacy, proved more important than force in determining the final outcome of the insurgency. When evaluated by the "Sword Model" the preponderance of the variables that comprise the dimension of Host Government Military Action are rated as unfavorable to Batista.

The effect of economic development upon the eventual outcome of the Cuban revolution is less clear. Cuba was enjoying rapid and diversified economic expansion throughout the 1950's.⁸ The economy was one of the most developed in the hemisphere. The implementation of major elements of the progressive Constitution of 1940 addressed many of the most pressing social issues. All of these circumstances would lead one to believe that social unrest was on the decline. Historical events were to prove otherwise. Perhaps the answer is as postulated by Ramon Ruiz. "Cuba had a revolution because it had a measure of economic development. . . . The majority of the population was poor, but not so ignorant that it could not visualize a better life for itself if certain structural changes were implemented."⁹

A surprising aspect uncovered during research concerns the number of active participants in the opposition movement. Castro's combatants numbered in the hundreds during the height of the insurgency. Estimates place the strength of the rebel army at less than one hundred thousand most of 1957.¹⁰ To this number one must add the support structure and the other opposition groups which operated principally in Havana. All told the total strength of the opposition is estimated by some sources at 8-10,000 people out of a total population estimated at slightly over 7 million.¹¹ This finding illustrates once again what can happen when the majority of a population decline to participate in the democratic process either because of fear, disenchantment or apathy. It also highlights an interesting tactic whereby a small dedicated group of insurgents can seize power if they are able to keep the majority of the populace out of the struggle should they fail to convince them to actually join the fight against the government.

Suggestions For Future Research

The topics listed below are beyond the scope of this research yet merit more profound study.

- (1) The role in Latin America of University

politics in providing a trained cadre of leaders for revolutionary movement.

(2) The role of the church and fraternal organizations in Latin American politics.

In summary the Batista regime failed to survive because it lacked legitimacy and internal/external unity of effort. The 'Sword Model' would have accurately predicted the regime's failure were it available in the 1950's. As such it provides present day analysts with an accurate method for evaluating on going insurgencies.

Endnotes

¹ Carlos Marques Sterling, Historia de la Isla de Cuba (New York, NY: Regents Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), pg. 329.

² Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, Cuba: The Making of a Revolution (New York, London: WW Norton & Co., 1968), pg. 12.

³ Carlos Marques Sterling, Historia de la Isla de Cuba, pg. 240-242.

⁴ Fulgencio Batista, Cuba Betrayed (New York, Washington, Hollywood: Vintage Press, 1962), pg. 32-33.

⁵ Robert Quirk, Fidel Castro (New York, London: WW Norton & Co., 1993), pg. 39-41.

⁶ Earl E.T. Smith, The Fourth Floor (New York: Random House, 1962), pg. 48.

⁷ Ramon Barquin, Las Luchas Guerrilleras en Cuba (Madrid, San Juan Puerto Rico: Editorial Playon, 1975), pg. 389-390.

⁸ Earl E.T. Smith, The Fourth Floor, pg. 41-42.

⁹ Ramon Eduardo Ruiz, Cuba: The Making of a Revolution, pg. 10.

¹⁰ Ramon Barquin, Las Luchas Guerrilleras en Cuba, pg. 415.

¹¹ Aldo Lopez, Student and Former political prisoner of Fidel Castro, Interview of 30 December 1993, at Belmont, MA.

APPENDIX

Key Informant Biographies

Mr. Aris Arias volunteered and served as an infantryman in the Cuban Army from 1955-1959. He participated in numerous engagements against the insurgents in the Sierra Maestra. He fled to the United States, following Castro's assumption of power, eventually settling in the Boston area where he is a businessman.

During the unrest in Cuba Mr. Arias fought against the insurgents for patriotic reasons but eventually became discouraged by instances of high ranking Army officers siding with the insurgents and the corruption that he observed.

Professor Ernesto E. Blanco, Professional Engineer. Graduated from Rennselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N.Y. in 1956 and returned to Cuba with his American wife and son ten days before Castro's landing in the Playa Colorada. Upon return to Cuba, he assumed the position of Chief Engineer of Matanzas Cordage Co., the largest cordage mill in Cuba. He remained in that position full time until late 1956 when he was appointed Professor and later Chairman of the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Vilanova in Havana. In August 1960, Professor Blanco and his family fled Cuba and ultimately settled in the Boston, MA area. He is currently an adjunct full Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

During the unrest in Cuba, Prof. Blanco remained aloof from political activities viewing the struggle between Batista and Castro as a battle between two gangsters but believing that Batista would ultimately prevail.

Mr. Aldo Lopez was a high school and an engineering student at the University of Havana who increasingly disagreed with Batista as he became more politically aware. He peacefully began opposing Batista as he witnessed the repressive measures employed by the police against the opposition. From 1961-1970, he was jailed by Castro for

counter-revolutionary activities. It was during this period that he conversed with many imprisoned former members of the Batista regime as well as prominent anti-communist members of the opposition. He emigrated to the United States in 1980 during the Mariel boat lift, eventually settling in the Boston area where he is a professional draftsman and engineering assistant.

Mr. Jose Salazar; Professional Engineer, graduated from the University of Havana in 1953 with a degree in Civil Engineering. While attending the University of Havana, he was a student leader of the School of Engineering F.E.U. From 1954-1956, he was an engineer at the Nicaro Nickel plant in Oriente until threatened with death by the Army. He fled to Havana where he was employed as a project engineer with the Pedro Imena Co. During this period he participated in strikes against Batista organized by the Resistencia Civica. Eventually he became a lieutenant in the insurgent Army. In 1960, he fled Cuba with his family and settled in the Boston, MA area where he currently practices as a civil engineer. His four sons have served as U.S. military officers.

During the unrest in Cuba, Mr. Salazar was an active, non-communist member of the Anti-Batista opposition.

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